THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THOMAS PAINE

VOL. X

MISCELLANY
POETRY
INDEX

Patriots' Edition

THOMAS PAINE NATIONAL HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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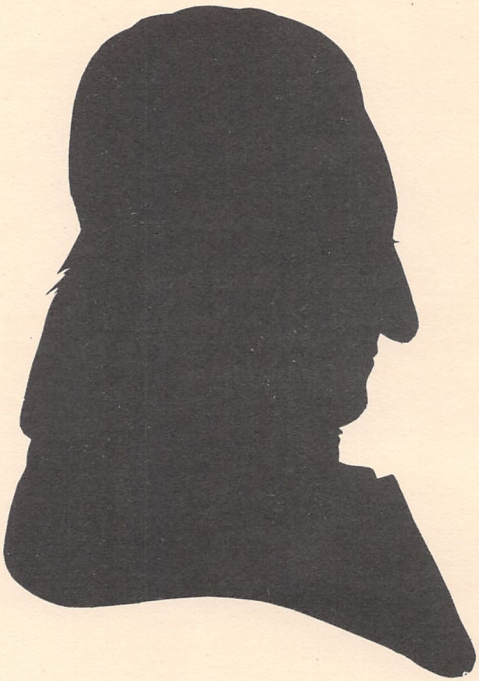

Silhouette of Thomas Paine

By John Wesley Jarvis. This likeness by the famous American portrait painter was probably the last made during Paine's lifetime.

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Patriots' Edition

Edited by

William M. Van der Weyde

VOLUME X

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Agrarian Justice	1
The Eighteenth Fructidor	39
The Recall of Monroe	77
Private Letter to Thomas Jefferson	81
Proposal That Louisiana Be Purchased	93
Thomas Paine to the Citizens of the United States	95
To the French Inhabitants of Louisiana	177
The Iron Bridge	189
The Construction of Iron Bridges	203
To the People of England on the Invasion of England	217
Constitutions, Governments and Charters	235
Constitutional Reform	243
The Cause of the Yellow Fever	273
Liberty of the Press	287
The Will of Thomas Paine	291
Appendix—Songs and Rhymes	299
Case of the Officers of Excise	327
Letter to Dr. Goldsmith	347
List of Illustrations	351
Index	353

MISCELLANY
SONGS AND RHYMES
INDEX

AGRARIAN JUSTICE

Author's Inscription

To the Legislature and the Executive Directory of the French Republic

THIS tract, as Paine calls it, is identified with the Theophilanthropic movement which Paine started in Paris, in 1786-7, and later introduced in America. It is important as being a precursor of the single tax movement, popularized by Henry George, in his "Progress and Poverty," a century later.

Paine issued this pamphlet as a proposal to the French Government, at a time when readjustment of landed property had become necessary through the Revolution.

It was suggested to him by a sermon published by the Bishop of Llandaff, on "The Wisdom and Goodness of God in having made both rich and poor." Paine denies that God made rich and poor, declaring "He made only male and female, and gave them the earth for their inheritance."

THE plan contained in this work is not adapted for any particular country alone: the principle on which it is based is general. But as the rights of man are a new study in this world, and one needing protection from priestly imposture, and the insolence of oppressions too long established, I have thought it right to place this little work under your safeguard.

When we reflect on the long and dense night in which France and all Europe have remained plunged by their governments and their priests, we must feel less surprise than grief

at the bewilderment caused by the first burst of light that dispels the darkness. The eye accustomed to darkness can hardly bear at first the broad daylight. It is by usage the eye learns to see, and it is the same in passing from any situation to its opposite.

As we have not at one instant renounced all our errors, we cannot at one stroke acquire knowledge of all our rights. France has had the honor of adding to the word *Liberty* that of *Equality;* and this word signifies essentially a principle that admits of no gradation in the things to which it applies. But equality is often misunderstood, often misapplied, and often violated.

Liberty and *Property* are words expressing all those of our possessions which are not of an intellectual nature. There are two kinds of property. Firstly, natural property, or that which comes to us from the Creator of the universe—such as the earth, air, water. Secondly, artificial or acquired property—the invention of men.

In the latter, equality is impossible; for to distribute it equally it would be necessary that all should have contributed in the same proportion, which can never be the case; and this being the case, every individual would hold on to his own property, as his right share. Equality of natural property is the sub-

ject of this little essay. Every individual in the world is born therein with legitimate claims on a certain kind of property, or its equivalent.

The right of voting for persons charged with the execution of the laws that govern society is inherent in the word liberty, and constitutes the equality of personal rights. But even if that right (of voting) were inherent in property, which I deny, the right of suffrage would still belong to all equally, because, as I have said, all individuals have legitimate birthrights in a certain species of property.

I have always considered the present Constitution of the French Republic the *best organized system* the human mind has yet produced. But I hope my former colleagues will not be offended if I warn them of an error which has slipped into its principle. Equality of the right of suffrage is not maintained. This right is in it connected with a condition on which it ought not to depend; that is, with a proportion of a certain tax called "direct."

The dignity of suffrage is thus lowered; and, in placing it in the scale with an inferior thing, the enthusiasm that right is capable of inspiring is diminished. It is impossible to find any equivalent counterpoise for the right of suffrage, because it is alone

worthy to be its own basis, and cannot thrive as a graft, or an appendage.

Since the Constitution was established we have seen two conspiracies stranded—that of Babeuf, and that of some obscure personages who decorate themselves with the despicable name of "royalists." The defect in principle of the Constitution was the origin of Babeuf's conspiracy.

He availed himself of the resentment caused by this flaw, and instead of seeking a remedy by legitimate and constitutional means, or proposing some measure useful to society, the conspirators did their best to renew disorder and confusion, and constituted themselves personally into a Directory, which is formally destructive of election and representation. They were, in fine, extravagant enough to suppose that society, occupied with its domestic affairs, would blindly yield to them a directorship usurped by violence.

The conspiracy of Babeuf was followed in a few months by that of the royalists, who foolishly flattered themselves with the notion of doing great things by feeble or foul means. They counted on all the discontented, from whatever cause, and tried to rouse, in their turn, the class of people who had been following the others. But these new chiefs acted as if

they thought society had nothing more at heart than to maintain courtiers, pensioners, and all their train, under the contemptible title of royalty. My little essay will disabuse them, by showing that society is aiming at a very different end—maintaining itself.

We all know or should know, that the time during which a revolution is proceeding is not the time when its resulting advantages can be enjoyed. But had Babeuf and his accomplices taken into consideration the condition of France under this Constitution, and compared it with what it was under the tragical revolutionary government, and during the execrable Reign of Terror, the rapidity of the alteration must have appeared to them very striking and astonishing. Famine has been replaced by abundance, and by the well-founded hope of a near and increasing prosperity.

As for the defect in the Constitution, I am fully convinced that it will be rectified constitutionally, and that this step is indispensable; for so long as it continues it will inspire the hopes and furnish the means of conspirators; and for the rest, it is regrettable that a Constitution so wisely organized should err so much in its principle. This fault exposes it to other dangers which will make themselves felt.

Intriguing candidates will go about among those who have not the means to pay the direct tax and pay

it for them, on condition of receiving their votes. Let us maintain inviolably equality in the sacred right of suffrage: public security can never have a basis more solid. *Salut et Fraternité.*

Your former colleague,

THOMAS PAINE.

Author's English Preface

IN THE same year (1797) that the pamphlet on "Agrarian Justice" was printed in English, by W. Adlard in Paris, an edition was brought out in London by Thomas Williams, who was prosecuted by the Crown for publishing Paine's "Age of Reason." Paine's preface to the London edition contained some sentences which the publisher suppressed under asterisks. Two sentences in particular were omitted from the pamphlet which are here given from the first Paris edition: "It is not charity but a right, not bounty but justice, that I am pleading for. The present state of civilization is as odious as it is unjust."

The English title adds a brief resumé of Paine's scheme to the caption—"Agrarian Justice opposed to Agrarian Law and to Agrarian Monopoly."

THE following little piece was written in the winter of 1795 and '96; and, as I had not determined whether to publish it during the present war, or to wait till the commencement of a peace, it has lain by me, without alteration or addition, from the time it was written.

What has determined me to publish it now is a sermon preached by Watson, Bishop of Llandaff. Some of my readers will recollect, that this Bishop wrote a book entitled "An Apology for the Bible," in answer to my second part of "The Age of Reason." I procured a copy of his book, and he may depend upon hearing from me on that subject.

At the end of the Bishop's book is a list of the works he has written. Among which is the sermon

alluded to; it is entitled: "The Wisdom and Goodness of God, in having made both Rich and Poor; with an Appendix, containing Reflections on the Present State of England and France."

The error contained in this sermon determined me to publish my "Agrarian Justice." It is wrong to say God made *rich* and *poor;* He made only *male* and *female;* and He gave them the earth for their inheritance. . . .

Instead of preaching to encourage one part of mankind in insolence . . . it would be better that priests employed their time to render the general condition of man less miserable than it is. Practical religion consists in doing good: and the only way of serving God is that of endeavoring to make His creation happy. All preaching that has not this for its object is nonsense and hypocrisy.

THOMAS PAINE.

AGRARIAN JUSTICE

AS THE author says, "Equality of natural property is the subject of this essay." It was written while Paine was a guest of the Monroes, following his release from the Luxembourg prison, and a year later (1797) was first published in Paris. A prefatory note to the first edition states that "The sudden departure of Thomas Paine has prevented his supervising the translation of this work, to which he attaches great value. He entrusted it to a friend. . . ."

Paine had left Paris early in May of 1797, planning to accompany James Monroe and his wife to America, but, reaching Havre, and suspecting danger of capture by an English warship should he sail, discreetly remained in France.

TO preserve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy at the same time the evil which it has produced, ought to be considered as one of the first objects of reformed legislation.

Whether that state that is proudly, perhaps erroneously, called civilization, has most promoted or most injured the general happiness of man, is a question that may be strongly contested. On one side, the spectator is dazzled by splendid appearances; on the other, he is shocked by extremes of wretchedness; both of which it has erected. The most affluent and the most miserable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To understand what the state of society ought to be, it is necessary to have some idea of the natural and primitive state of man; such as it is at this day

among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that state, any of those spectacles of human misery which poverty and want present to our eyes in all the towns and streets in Europe.

Poverty, therefore, is a thing created by that which is called civilized life. It exists not in the natural state. On the other hand, the natural state is without those advantages which flow from agriculture, arts, science and manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe; and, on the other hand it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that which is so called, has operated two ways: to make one part of society more affluent, and the other more wretched, than would have been the lot of either in a natural state.

It is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state. The reason is that man in a natural state, subsisting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over to procure himself sustenance, than would support him in a civilized state, where the earth is cultivated.

When, therefore, a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, art and science,

there is a necessity of preserving things in that state; because without it there cannot be sustenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing, therefore, now to be done is to remedy the evils and preserve the benefits that have arisen to society by passing from the natural to that which is called the civilized state.

In taking the matter upon this ground, the first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period.

But the fact is that the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North America at the present day. I will show how this fact has happened.

It is a position not to be controverted that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race.* In that state every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life proprietor with the rest in the property of the soil, and in all its natural productions, vegetable and animal.

But the earth in its natural state, as before said, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connection; but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement, only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property.

Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated lands, owes to the community a *ground-rent* (for I know of no better term to express the idea) for the land which he holds; and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing as from all the histories transmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no such thing as landed property before that time. It could not exist in the first state of man, that of hunters. It did not exist in the second state, that of shepherds: neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor Job, so far as the history of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land.

Their property consisted, as is always enumerated in flocks and herds, and they traveled with them from

place to place. The frequent contentions at that time about the use of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where those people lived, also show that there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be claimed as property.

There could be no such thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate as his property* in perpetuity any part of it; neither did the Creator of the earth open a land-office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue. Whence then, arose the idea of landed property? I answer as before, that when cultivation began the idea of landed property began with it, from the impossibility of separating the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement was made.

The value of the improvement so far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time, as to absorb it; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But there are, nevertheless, distinct species of rights, and will continue to be, so long as the earth endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin that we can gain rightful ideas of them, and it is by gaining

such ideas that we discover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and teaches every man to know his own. I have entitled this tract "Agrarian Justice" to distinguish it from "Agrarian Law."

Nothing could be more unjust than agrarian law in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural state, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the system was admitted, became the property of those who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchased it. It had originally no owner. While, therefore, I advocate the right, and interest myself in the hard case of all those who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property, I equally defend the right of the possessor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is at least one of the greatest natural improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a tenfold value. But the landed monopoly that began with it has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss, and

has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.

In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right, and not a charity, that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right which, being neglected at first, could not be brought forward afterwards till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the system of government. Let us then do honor to revolutions by justice, and give currency to their principles by blessings.

Having thus in a few words, opened the merits of the case, I shall now proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is,

To create a national fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property:

And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age.

Means By Which the Fund Is to be Created

I have already established the principle, namely, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, the *common property of the human race;* that in that state, every person would have been born to property; and that the system of landed property, by its inseparable connection with cultivation, and with what is called civilized life, has absorbed the property of all those whom it dispossessed, without providing, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss.

The fault, however, is not in the present possessors. No complaint is intended, or ought to be alleged against them, unless they adopt the crime by opposing justice. The fault is in the system, and it has stolen imperceptibly upon the world, aided afterwards by the agrarian law of the sword. But the fault can be made to reform itself by successive generations; and without diminishing or deranging the property of any of the present possessors, the operation of the fund can yet commence, and be in full activity, the first year of its establishment, or soon after, as I shall show.

It is proposed that the payments, as already stated, be made to every person, rich or poor. It is best to

make it so, to prevent invidious distinctions. It is also right it should be so, because it is in lieu of the natural inheritance, which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created, or inherited from those who did. Such persons as do not choose to receive it can throw it into the common fund.

Taking it then for granted that no person ought to be in a worse condition when born under what is called a state of civilization, than he would have been had he been born in a state of nature, and that civilization ought to have made, and ought still to make, provision for that purpose, it can only be done by subtracting from property a portion equal in value to the natural inheritance it has absorbed.

Various methods may be proposed for this purpose, but that which appears to be the best (not only because it will operate without deranging any present possessors, or without interfering with the collection of taxes or *emprunts* necessary for the purposes of government and the Revolution, but because it will be the least troublesome and the most effectual, and also because the subtraction will be made at a time that best admits it) is at the moment that property is passing by the death of one person to the possession of another. In this case, the bequeather gives

nothing: the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, begins to cease in his person. A generous man would not wish it to continue, and a just man will rejoice to see it abolished.

My state of health prevents my making sufficient inquiries with respect to the doctrine of probabilities, whereon to found calculations with such degrees of certainty as they are capable of. What, therefore, I offer on this head is more the result of observation and reflection than of received information; but I believe it will be found to agree sufficiently with fact. In the first place, taking twenty-one years as the epoch of maturity, all the property of a nation, real and personal, is always in the possession of persons above that age. It is then necessary to know, as a datum of calculation, the average of years which persons above that age will live. I take this average to be about thirty years, for though many persons will live forty, fifty, or sixty years, after the age of twenty-one years, others will die much sooner, and some in every year of that time.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time, it will give, without any material variation one way or other, the average of time in which the whole prop-

erty or capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will have passed through one entire revolution in descent, that is, will have gone by deaths to new possessors; for though, in many instance, some parts of this capital will remain forty, fifty, or sixty years in the possession of one person, other parts will have revolved two or three times before those thirty years expire, which will bring it to that average; for were one-half the capital of a nation to revolve twice in thirty years, it would produce the same fund as if the whole revolved once.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time in which the whole capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will revolve once, the thirtieth part thereof will be the sum that will revolve every year, that is, will go by deaths to new possessors; and this last sum being thus known, and the ratio per cent to be subtracted from it determined, it will give the annual amount or income of the proposed fund, to be applied as already mentioned.

In looking over the discourse of the English Minister, Pitt, in his opening of what is called in England the budget (the scheme of finance for the year 1796), I find an estimate of the national capital of that country. As this estimate of a national capital is prepared ready to my hand, I take it as a datum to

act upon. When a calculation is made upon the known capital of any nation, combined with its population, it will serve as a scale for any other nation, in proportion as its capital and population be more or less.

I am the more disposed to take this estimate of Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of showing to that minister, upon his own calculation, how much better money may be employed than in wasting it, as he has done, on the wild project of setting up Bourbon kings. What, in the name of heaven, are Bourbon kings to the people of England? It is better that the people have bread.

Mr. Pitt states the national capital of England, real and personal, to be one thousand three hundred millions sterling, which is about one-fourth part of the national capital of France, including Belgia. The event of the last harvest in each country proves that the soil of France is more productive than that of England, and that it can better support twenty-four or twenty-five millions of inhabitants than that of England can seven or seven and a half millions.

The thirtieth part of this capital of £1,300,000,000 is £43,333,333 which is the part that will revolve every year by deaths in that country to new possessors; and the sum that will annually revolve

in France in the proportion of four to one, will be about one hundred and seventy-three millions sterling. From this sum of £43,333,333 annually revolving, is to be subtracted the value of the natural inheritance absorbed in it, which, perhaps, in fair justice, cannot be taken at less, and ought not to be taken for more, than a tenth part.

It will always happen that of the property thus revolving by deaths every year a part will descend in a direct line to sons and daughters, and the other part collaterally, and the proportion will be found to be about three to one; that is, about thirty millions of the above sum will descend to direct heirs, and the remaining sum of £13,333,333 to more distant relations, and in part to strangers.

Considering, then, that man is always related to society, that relationship will become comparatively greater in proportion as the next of kin is more distant; it is therefore consistent with civilization to say that where there are no direct heirs society shall be heir to a part over and above the tenth part *due* to society.

If this additional part be from five to ten or twelve per cent, in proportion as the next of kin be nearer or more remote, so as to average with the escheats

that may fall, which ought always to go to society and not to the government (an addition of ten per cent more), the produce from the annual sum of £43,333,333 will be:

From £30,000,000 at ten per cent. . .	£3,000,000
From £13,333,333 at ten per cent with the addition of ten per cent more.	2,666,666
£43,333,333	£5,666,666

Having thus arrived at the annual amount of the proposed fund, I come, in the next place, to speak of the population proportioned to this fund and to compare it with the uses to which the fund is to be applied.

The population (I mean that of England) does not exceed seven millions and a half, and the number of persons above the age of fifty will in that case be about four hundred thousand. There would not, however, be more than that number that would accept the proposed ten pounds sterling per annum, though they would be entitled to it. I have no idea it would be accepted by many persons who had a yearly income of two or three hundred pounds ster-

ling. But as we often see instances of rich people falling into sudden poverty, even at the age of sixty, they would always have the right of drawing all the arrears due to them. Four millions, therefore, of the above annual sum of £5,666,666 will be required for four hundred thousand aged persons, at ten pounds sterling each.

I come now to speak of the persons annually arriving at twenty-one years of age. If all the persons who died were above the age of twenty-one years, the number of persons annually arriving at that age must be equal to the annual number of deaths, to keep the population stationary. But the greater part die under the age of twenty-one, and therefore the number of persons annually arriving at twenty-one will be less than half the number of deaths.

The whole number of deaths upon a population of seven millions and an half will be about 220,000 annually. The number arriving at twenty-one years of age will be about 100,000. The whole number of these will not receive the proposed fifteen pounds, for the reasons already mentioned, though, as in the former case, they would be entitled to it. Admitting then that a tenth part declined receiving it, the amount would stand thus:

Fund annually		£5,666,666
To 400,000 aged persons at £10 each	£4,000,000	
To 90,000 persons of 21 yrs., £15 ster. each . . .	1,350,000	
		5,350,000
	Remains	£ 316,666

There are, in every country, a number of blind and lame persons totally incapable of earning a livelihood. But as it will always happen that the greater number of blind persons will be among those who are above the age of fifty years, they will be provided for in that class. The remaining sum of £316,666 will provide for the lame and blind under that age, at the same rate of £10 annually for each person.

Having now gone through all the necessary calculations, and stated the particulars of the plan, I shall conclude with some observations.

[1] It is not charity but a right, not bounty but justice, that I am pleading for. The present state of civilization is as odious as it is unjust. It is absolutely the opposite of what it should be, and it is necessary that a revolution should be made in it. The contrast of affluence and wretchedness continually

[1] This and the sentence that follows it were omitted from the first English edition of 1797.—*Editor.*

meeting and offending the eye, is like dead and living bodies chained together. Though I care as little about riches as any man, I am a friend to riches because they are capable of good.

I care not how affluent some may be, provided that none be miserable in consequence of it. But it is impossible to enjoy affluence with the felicity it is capable of being enjoyed, while so much misery is mingled in the scene. The sight of the misery, and the unpleasant sensations it suggests, which, though they may be suffocated cannot be extinguished, are a greater drawback upon the felicity of affluence than the proposed ten per cent upon property is worth. He that would not give the one to get rid of the other has no charity, even for himself.

There are, in every country, some magnificent charities established by individuals. It is, however, but little that any individual can do, when the whole extent of the misery to be relieved is considered. He may satisfy his conscience, but not his heart. He may give all that he has, and that all will relieve but little. It is only by organizing civilization upon such principles as to act like a system of pulleys, that the whole weight of misery can be removed.

The plan here proposed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve and take out of view three

classes of wretchedness—the blind, the lame, and the aged poor; and it will furnish the rising generation with means to prevent their becoming poor; and it will do this without deranging or interfering with any national measures.

To show that this will be the case, it is sufficient to observe that the operation and effect of the plan will, in all cases, be the same as if every individual were *voluntarily* to make his will and dispose of his property in the manner here proposed.

But it is justice, and not charity, that is the principle of the plan. In all great cases it is necessary to have a principle more universally active than charity; and, with respect to justice, it ought not to be left to the choice of detached individuals whether they will do justice or not. Considering, then, the plan on the ground of justice, it ought to be the act of the whole growing spontaneously out of the principles of the revolution, and the reputation of it ought to be national and not individual.

A plan upon this principle would benefit the revolution by the energy that springs from the consciousness of justice. It would multiply also the national resources; for property, like vegetation, increases by offsets. When a young couple begin the world, the difference is exceedingly great whether they begin

with nothing or with fifteen pounds apiece. With this aid they could buy a cow, and implements to cultivate a few acres of land; and instead of becoming burdens upon society, which is always the case where children are produced faster than they can be fed, would be put in the way of becoming useful and profitable citizens. The national domains also would sell the better if pecuniary aids were provided to cultivate them in small lots.

It is the practise of what has unjustly obtained the name of civilization (and the practise merits not to be called either charity or policy) to make some provision for persons becoming poor and wretched only at the time they become so. Would it not, even as a matter of economy, be far better to adopt means to prevent their becoming poor? This can best be done by making every person when arrived at the age of twenty-one years an inheritor of something to begin with.

The rugged face of society, checkered with the extremes of affluence and want, proves that some extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on justice for redress. The great mass of the poor in all countries are become an hereditary race, and it is next to impossible for them to get out of that state of themselves. It ought also to be observed

that this mass increases in all countries that are called civilized. More persons fall annually into it than get out of it.

Though in a plan of which justice and humanity are the foundation-principles, interest ought not to be admitted into the calculation, yet it is always of advantage to the establishment of any plan to show that it is beneficial as a matter of interest. The success of any proposed plan submitted to public consideration must finally depend on the numbers interested in supporting it, united with the justice of its principles.

The plan here proposed will benefit all, without injuring any. It will consolidate the interest of the republic with that of the individual. To the numerous class dispossessed of their natural inheritance by the system of landed property it will be an act of national justice. To persons dying possessed of moderate fortunes it will operate as a tontine to their children, more beneficial than the sum of money paid into the fund: and it will give to the accumulation of riches a degree of security that none of the old governments of Europe, now tottering on their foundations, can give.

I do not suppose that more than one family in ten, in any of the countries of Europe, has, when the head of the family dies, a clear property left of five hun-

dred pounds sterling. To all such the plan is advantageous. That property would pay fifty pounds into the fund, and if there were only two children under age they would receive fifteen pounds each (thirty pounds), on coming of age, and be entitled to ten pounds a year after fifty.

It is from the overgrown acquisition of property that the fund will support itself; and I know that the possessors of such property in England, though they would eventually be benefited by the protection of nine-tenths of it, will exclaim against the plan. But without entering into any inquiry how they came by that property, let them recollect that they have been the advocates of this war, and that Mr. Pitt has already laid on more new taxes to be raised annually upon the people of England, and that for supporting the despotism of Austria and the Bourbons against the liberties of France, than would pay annually all the sums proposed in this plan.

I have made the calculations stated in this plan, upon what is called personal, as well as upon landed property. The reason for making it upon land is already explained; and the reason for taking personal personal property into the calculation is equally well founded though on a different principle. Land, as before said, is the free gift of the Creator in common

to the human race. Personal property is the *effect of society;* and it is as impossible for an individual to acquire personal property without the aid of society, as it is for him to make land originally.

Separate an individual from society, and give him an island or a continent to possess, and he cannot acquire personal property. He cannot be rich. So inseparably are the means connected with the end, in all cases, that where the former do not exist the latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of personal property, beyond what a man's own hands produce, is derived to him by living in society; and he owes on every principle of justice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to society from whence the whole came.

This is putting the matter on a general principle, and perhaps it is best to do so; for if we examine the case minutely it will be found that the accumulation of personal property is, in many instances, the effect of paying too little for the labor that produced it; the consequence of which is that the working hand perishes in old age, and the employer abounds in affluence.

It is, perhaps, impossible to proportion exactly the price of labor to the profits it produces; and it will also be said, as an apology for the injustice, that were

a workman to receive an increase of wages daily he would not save it against old age, nor be much better for it in the interim. Make, then, society the treasurer to guard it for him in a common fund; for it is no reason that, because he might not make a good use of it for himself, another should take it.

The state of civilization that has prevailed throughout Europe, is as unjust in its principle, as it is horrid in its effects; and it is the consciousness of this, and the apprehension that such a state cannot continue when once investigation begins in any country, that makes the possessors of property dread every idea of a revolution. It is the hazard and not the principle of revolutions that retards their progress. This being the case, it is necessary as well for the protection of property as for the sake of justice and humanity, to form a system that, while it preserves one part of society from wretchedness, shall secure the other from depredation.

The superstitious awe, the enslaving reverence, that formerly surrounded affluence, is passing away in all countries, and leaving the possessor of property to the convulsion of accidents. When wealth and splendor, instead of fascinating the multitude, excite emotions of disgust; when, instead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an insult upon wretched-

ness; when the ostentatious appearance it makes serves to call the right of it in question, the case of property becomes critical, and it is only in a system of justice that the possessor can contemplate security.

To remove the danger, it is necessary to remove the antipathies, and this can only be done by making property productive of a national blessing, extending to every individual. When the riches of one man above another shall increase the national fund in the same proportion; when it shall be seen that the prosperity of that fund depends on the prosperity of individuals; when the more riches a man acquires, the better it shall be for the general mass; it is then that antipathies will cease, and property be placed on the permanent basis of national interest and protection.

I have no property in France to become subject to the plan I propose. What I have, which is not much, is in the United States of America. But I will pay one hundred pounds sterling toward this fund in France, the instant it shall be established; and I will pay the same sum in England, whenever a similar establishment shall take place in that country.

A revolution in the state of civilization is the necessary companion of revolutions in the system of government. If a revolution in any country be from bad to good, or from good to bad, the state of what is called

civilization in that country, must be made conformable thereto, to give that revolution effect.

Despotic government supports itself by abject civilization, in which debasement of the human mind, and wretchedness in the mass of the people, are the chief criterions. Such governments consider man merely as an animal; that the exercise of intellectual faculty is not his privilege; *that he has nothing to do with the laws but to obey them;* * and they politically depend more upon breaking the spirit of the people by poverty, than they fear enraging it by desperation.

It is a revolution in the state of civilization that will give perfection to the Revolution of France. Already the conviction that government by representation is the true system of government is spreading itself fast in the world. The reasonableness of it can be seen by all. The justness of it makes itself felt even by its opposers. But when a system of civilization, growing out of that system of government, shall be so organized that not a man or woman born in the Republic but shall inherit some means of beginning the world, and see before them the certainty of escaping the miseries that under other governments accom-

* An expression used by Bishop Horsley in the Parliament of England.—*Author.*

pany old age, the Revolution of France will have an advocate and an ally in the heart of all nations.

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail: it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the ocean that can arrest its progress: it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.

Means for Carrying the Proposed Plan Into Execution, and to Render It at the Same Time Conducive to the Public Interest

I. Each canton shall elect in its primary assemblies, three persons, as commissioners for that canton, who shall take cognizance, and keep a register of all matters happening in that canton, conformable to the charter that shall be established by law for carrying this plan into execution.

II. The law shall fix the manner in which the property of deceased persons shall be ascertained.

III. When the amount of the property of any deceased persons shall be ascertained, the principal heir to that property, or the eldest of the co-heirs, if of lawful age, or if under age, the person authorized by the will of the deceased to represent him or them,

shall give bond to the commissioners of the canton to pay the said tenth part thereof in four equal quarterly payments, within the space of one year or sooner, at the choice of the payers. One-half of the whole property shall remain as a security until the bond be paid off.

IV. The bond shall be registered in the office of the commissioners of the canton, and the original bonds shall be deposited in the national bank at Paris. The bank shall publish every quarter of a year the amount of the bonds in its possession, and also the bonds that shall have been paid off, or what parts thereof, since the last quarterly publication.

V. The national bank shall issue bank notes upon the security of the bonds in its possession. The notes so issued, shall be applied to pay the pensions of aged persons, and the compensations to persons arriving at twenty-one years of age. It is both reasonable and generous to suppose, that persons not under immediate necessity, will suspend their right of drawing on the fund, until it acquire, as it will do, a greater degree of ability. In this case, it is proposed, that an honorary register be kept, in each canton, of the names of the persons thus suspending that right, at least during the present war.

VI. As the inheritors of property must always take up their bonds in four quarterly payments, or sooner if they choose, there will always be *numéraire* [cash] arriving at the bank after the expiration of the first quarter, to exchange for the bank notes that shall be brought in.

VII. The bank notes being thus put in circulation, upon the best of all possible security, that of actual property, to more than four times the amount of the bonds upon which the notes are issued, and with *numéraire* continually arriving at the bank to exchange or pay them off whenever they shall be presented for that purpose, they will acquire a permanent value in all parts of the Republic. They can therefore be received in payment of taxes, or *emprunts* equal to *numéraire*, because the Government can always receive *numéraire* for them at the bank.

VIII. It will be necessary that the payments of the ten per cent be made in *numéraire* for the first year from the establishment of the plan. But after the expiration of the first year, the inheritors of property may pay ten per cent either in bank notes issued upon the fund, or in *numéraire*.

If the payments be in *numéraire*, it will lie as a deposit at the bank, to be exchanged for a quantity of

notes equal to that amount; and if in notes issued upon the fund, it will cause a demand upon the fund equal thereto; and thus the operation of the plan will create means to carry itself into execution.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR

To the People of France and the French Armies

THE Eighteenth Fructidor, September 4, 1797, is celebrated as the day on which Barras, Rewbell and La Reveillère, members of the French Directory, by a coup d'état, saved the Republic from the reactionaries, headed by General Charles Pichegru, president of the Council of Five Hundred. Pichegru and his adherents had obtained the upper hand in the Council, and were implicated in a royalist conspiracy engineered by the Prince of Condé, who had converted Pichegru into a secret partisan of the Bourbons. His intrigues being discovered, Pichegru was arrested and subsequently transported to Cayenne, French Guiana, but escaped, in 1798, to England. He conspired to assassinate Napoleon, who had once been his pupil at the Brienne military academy.

In this pamphlet Paine cites Pichegru as an example of the damage that France would have suffered had the presidency of the Council of Five Hundred been an hereditary office.

WHEN an extraordinary measure, not warranted by established constitutional rules and justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, bursts suddenly upon us, we must, in order to form a true judgment thereon, carry our researches back to the times that preceded and occasioned it. Taking up then the subject with respect to the event of the eighteenth of Fructidor on this ground, I go to examine the state of things prior to that period. I begin with the establishment of the Constitution of the year 3 of the French Republic. A better *organized* Constitution has never

yet been devised by human wisdom. It is, in its organization, free from all the vices and defects to which other forms of government are more or less subject. I will speak first of the legislative body, because the legislature is, in the natural order of things, the first power; the executive is the first magistrate.

By arranging the legislative body into two divisions, as is done in the French Constitution, the one (the Council of Five Hundred), whose part it is to conceive and propose laws; the other, a Council of Ancients, to review, approve, or reject the laws proposed; all the security is given that can arise from coolness of reflection acting upon, or correcting the precipitancy or enthusiasm of conception and imagination. It is seldom that our first thought, even upon any subject, is sufficiently just.

The policy of renewing the legislature by a third part each year, though not entirely new, either in theory or in practise, is nevertheless one of the modern improvements in the science of government. It prevents, on the one hand, that convulsion and precipitate change of measures into which a nation might be surprised by the going out of the whole legislature at the same time, and the instantaneous election of a

new one; on the other hand, it excludes that common interest from taking place that might tempt a whole legislature, whose term of duration expired at once, to usurp the right of continuance. I go now to speak of the executive.

It is a principle uncontrovertible by reason, that each of the parts by which government is composed, should be so constructed as to be in perpetual maturity. We should laugh at the idea of a council of five hundred, or a council of ancients, or a parliament, or any national assembly, who should be all children in leading strings and in the cradle, or be all sick, insane, deaf, dumb, lame or blind, at the same time, or be all upon crutches, tottering with age or infirmities.

Any form of government that was so constructed as to admit the possibility of such cases happening to a whole legislature would justly be the ridicule of the world; and on a parity of reasoning, it is equally as ridiculous that the same cases should happen in that part of government which is called the executive; yet this is the contemptible condition to which an executive is always subject, and which is often happening, when it is placed in an hereditary individual called a king.

When that individual is in either of the cases before mentioned, the whole executive is in the same case; for himself is the whole. He is then (as an executive) the ridiculous picture of what a legislature would be if all its members were in the same case. The one is a whole made up of parts, the other a whole without parts; and anything happening to the one (as a part or section of the government) is parallel to the same thing happening to the other.

As, therefore, an hereditary executive called a king is a perfect absurdity in itself, any attachment to it is equally as absurd. It is neither instinct or reason; and if this attachment is what is called royalism in France, then is a royalist inferior in character to every species of the animal world; for what can that being be who acts neither by instinct nor by reason?

Such a being merits rather our derision than our pity; and it is only when it assumes to act its folly that it becomes capable of provoking republican indignation. In every other case it is too contemptible to excite anger. For my own part, when I contemplate the self-evident absurdity of the thing, I can scarcely permit myself to believe that there exists in the high-minded nation of France such a mean and silly animal as a royalist.

As it requires but a single glance of thought to see (as is before said) that all the parts of which government is composed must be at all times in a state of full maturity, it was not possible that men acting under the influence of reason, could, in forming a constitution, admit an hereditary executive, any more than an hereditary legislature. I go therefore to examine the other cases.

In the first place (rejecting the hereditary system), shall the executive by election be an *individual* or *a plurality?*

An individual by election is almost as bad as the hereditary system, except that there is always a better chance of not having an idiot. But he will never be anything more than a chief of a party, and none but those of that party will have access to him. He will have no person to consult with of a standing equal with himself, and consequently be deprived of the advantages arising from equal discussion.

Those whom he admits in consultation will be ministers of his own appointment, who, if they displease by their advice, must expect to be dismissed. The authority also is too great, and the business too complicated, to be intrusted to the ambition or the judgment of an individual; and besides these cases, the sudden change of measures that might follow by the

going out of an individual executive, and the election of a new one, would hold the affairs of a nation in a state of perpetual uncertainty. We come then to the case of a plural executive.

It must be sufficiently plural, to give opportunity to discuss all the various subjects that in the course of national business may come before it; and yet not so numerous as to endanger the necessary secrecy that certain cases, such as those of war, require.

Establishing, then, plurality as a principle, the only question is, What shall be the number of that plurality?

Three are too few either for the variety or the quantity of business. The Constitution has adopted *five;* and experience has shown, from the commencement of the Constitution to the time of the election of the new legislative third, that this number of directors, when well chosen, is sufficient for all national executive purposes; and therefore a greater number would be only an unnecessary expense.

That the measures of the Directory during that period were well concerted is proved by their success; and their being well concerted shows they were well discussed; and, therefore, that *five* is a sufficient number with respect to discussion; and, on the other hand, the secret, whenever there was one (as in the case of

the expedition to Ireland), was well kept, and therefore the number is not too great to endanger the necessary secrecy.

The reason why the two Councils are numerous is not from the necessity of their being so, on account of business, but because that every part of the Republic shall find and feel itself in the national representation.

Next to the general principle of government by representation, the excellence of the French Constitution consists in providing means to prevent that abuse of power that might arise by letting it remain too long in the same hands. This wise precaution pervades every part of the Constitution. Not only the Legislature is renewable by a third every year, but the president of each of the Councils is renewable every month; and of the Directory, one member each year, and its president every three months.

Those who formed the Constitution cannot be accused of having contrived for themselves. The Constitution, in this respect, is as impartially constructed as if those who framed it were to die as soon as they had finished their work.

The only defect in the Constitution is that of having narrowed the right of suffrage; and it is in a great measure due to this narrowing the right, that the last

elections have not generally been good. My former colleagues will, I presume, pardon my saying this to-day, when they recollect my arguments against this defect, at the time the Constitution was discussed in the Convention.

I will close this part of the subject by remarking on one of the most vulgar and absurd *sayings* or dogmas that ever yet imposed itself upon the world, which is, "*that a Republic is fit only for a small country, and a Monarchy for a large one.*" Ask those who say this their reasons why it is so, and they can give none.

Let us then examine the case. If the quantity of knowledge in a government ought to be proportioned to the extent of a country, and the magnitude and variety of its affairs, it follows, as an undeniable result, that this absurd dogma is false, and that the reverse of it is true. As to what is called monarchy, if it be adaptable to any country it can only be so to a small one, whose concerns are few, little complicated, and all within the comprehension of an individual.

But when we come to a country of large extent, vast population, and whose affairs are great, numerous and various, it is the representative republican system only, that can collect into the government the quan-

tity of knowledge necessary to govern to the best national advantage. Montesquieu, who was strongly inclined to republican government, sheltered himself under this absurd dogma; for he had always the Bastile before his eyes when he was speaking of republics, and therefore *pretended* not to write for France.

Condorcet governed himself by the same caution, but it was caution only, for no sooner had he the opportunity of speaking fully out than he did it. When I say this of Condorcet, I know it as a fact. In a paper published in Paris, July, 1791, entitled, "The Republican or the Defender of Representative Government," is a piece signed THOMAS PAINE. That piece was concerted between Condorcet and myself. I wrote the original in English, and Condorcet translated it. The object of it was to expose the absurdity and falsehood of the above mentioned dogma.

Having thus concisely glanced at the excellencies of the Constitution, and the superiority of the representative system of government over every other system (if any other can be called a system), I come to speak of the circumstances that have intervened between the time the Constitution was established and the event that took place on the eighteenth of Fructidor of the present year.

Almost as suddenly as the morning light dissipates darkness, did the establishment of the Constitution change the face of affairs in France. Security succeeded to terror, prosperity to distress, plenty to famine, and confidence increased as the days multiplied, until the coming of the new third. A series of victories unequaled in the world, followed each other, almost too rapidly to be counted, and too numerous to be remembered.

The Coalition, everywhere defeated and confounded, crumbled away like a ball of dust in the hand of a giant. Everything, during that period, was acted on such a mighty scale that reality appeared a dream, and truth outstripped romance. It may figuratively be said, that the Rhine and the Rubicon (Germany and Italy) replied in triumphs to each other, and the echoing Alps prolonged the shout. I will not here dishonor a great description by noticing too much the English Government. It is sufficient to say paradoxically, that in the magnitude of its littleness it cringed, it intrigued, and sought protection in corruption.

Though the achievements of these days might give trophies to a nation and laurels to its heroes, they derive their full radiance of glory from the principle they inspired and the object they accomplished.

Desolation, chains and slavery had marked the progress of former wars, but to conquer for liberty had never been thought of.

To receive the degrading submission of a distressed and subjugated people, and insultingly permit them to live, made the chief triumph of former conquerors; but to receive them with fraternity, to break their chains, to tell them they are free, and teach them to be so, make a new volume in the history of man.

Amidst those national honors, and when only two enemies remained, both of whom had solicited peace, and one of them had signed preliminaries, the election of the new third commenced. Everything was made easy to them. All difficulties had been conquered before they arrived at the government. They came in the olive days of the Revolution, and all they had to do was not to do mischief.

It was, however, not difficult to foresee that the elections would not be generally good. The horrid days of Robespierre were still remembered, and the gratitude due to those who had put an end to them was forgotten.

Thousands who, by passive approbation during that tremendous scene, had experienced no suffering, assumed the merit of being the loudest against it. Their cowardice in not opposing it became courage

when it was over. They exclaimed against terrorism as if they had been the heroes that overthrew it, and rendered themselves ridiculous by fantastically over-acting moderation.

The most noisy of this class that I have met with are those who suffered nothing. They became all things, at all times, to all men; till at last they laughed at principle. It was the real republicans who suffered most during the time of Robespierre. The persecution began upon them on the thirty-first of May [1793] and ceased only by the exertions of the remnant that survived.

In such a confused state of things as preceded the late elections the public mind was put into a condition of being easily deceived; and it was almost natural that the hypocrite would stand the best chance of being elected into the new third. Had those who, since their election, have thrown the public affairs into confusion by counter-revolutionary measures, declared themselves beforehand, they would have been denounced instead of being chosen. Deception was necessary to their success.

The Constitution obtained a full establishment; the Revolution was considered as complete; and the war on the eve of termination. In such a situation, the mass of the people, fatigued by a long revolution,

sought repose; and in their elections they looked out for quiet men. They unfortunately found hypocrites.

Would any of the primary assemblies have voted for a civil war? Certainly they would not. But the electoral assemblies of some departments have chosen men whose measures, since their election, tended to no other end but to provoke it. Either those electors have deceived their constituents of the primary assemblies, or they have been themselves deceived in the choice they made of deputies.

That there were some direct but secret conspirators in the new third can scarcely admit of a doubt; but it is most reasonable to suppose that a great part were seduced by the vanity of thinking they could do better than those whom they succeeded. Instead of trusting to experience, they attempted experiments. This counter-disposition prepared them to fall in with any measures contrary to former measures, and that without seeing, and probably without suspecting, the end to which they led.

No sooner were the members of the new third arrived at the seat of government than expectation was excited to see how they would act. Their motions were watched by all parties, and it was impossible for them to steal a march unobserved. They had it in their power to do great good, or great mischief. A

firm and manly conduct on their part, uniting with that of the Directory and their colleagues, would have terminated the war. But the moment before them was not the moment of hesitation. He that hesitates in such situation is lost.

The first public act of the Council of Five Hundred was the election of Pichegru to the presidency of that Council. He arrived at it by a very large majority, and the public voice was in his favor. I among the rest was one who rejoiced at it. But if the defection of Pichegru was at that time known to Condé, and consequently to Pitt, it unveils the cause that retarded all negotiations for peace.[1]

They interpreted that election into a signal of a counter-revolution, and were waiting for it; and they mistook the respect shown to Pichegru, founded on the supposition of his integrity, as a symptom of national revolt. Judging of things by their own foolish ideas of government, they ascribed appearances to causes between which there was no connection. Everything on their part has been a comedy of errors, and the actors have been chased from the stage.

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[1] This Prince of Condé, Louis Joseph de Bourbon, who organized the French emigrants on the Rhine into an army nominally Austrian but paid by England, converted Pichegru to support the Bourbons secretly. Under Louis XVIII he became colonel of infantry and master of the royal household.—*Editor.*

Two or three decades of the new sessions passed away without anything very material taking place; but matters soon began to explain themselves. The first thing that struck the public mind was that no more was heard of negotiations for peace, and that public business stood still. It was not the object of the conspirators that there should be peace; but as it was necessary to conceal their object, the Constitution was ransacked to find pretenses for delays.

In vain did the Directory explain to them the state of the finances and the wants of the army. The committee, charged with that business, trifled away its time by a series of unproductive reports, and continued to sit only to produce more. Everything necessary to be done was neglected, and everything improper was attempted. Pichegru occupied himself about forming a national guard for the Councils—the suspicious signal of war—Camille Jordan about priests and bells, and the emigrants, with whom he had associated during the two years he was in England.

Willot and Delarue attacked the Directory: their object was to displace some one of the directors, to get in another of their own. Their motives with respect to the age of Barras (who is as old as he wishes

to be, and has been a little too old for them) were too obvious not to be seen through.[1]

In this suspensive state of things, the public mind, filled with apprehensions, became agitated, and without knowing what it might be, looked for some extraordinary event. It saw, for it could not avoid seeing, that things could not remain long in the state they were in, but it dreaded a convulsion.

That spirit of triflingness which it had indulged too freely when in a state of security, and which it is probable the new agents had interpreted into indifference about the success of the Republic, assumed a serious aspect that afforded to conspiracy no hope of aid; but still it went on. It plunged itself into new measures with the same ill success, and the further it went the further the public mind retired. The conspiracy saw nothing around it to give it encouragement.

The obstinacy, however, with which it persevered in its repeated attacks upon the Directory, in framing laws in favor of emigrants and refractory priests, and in everything inconsistent with the immediate safety of the Republic, and which served to encourage the

[1] Barras was at this time, 1797, President of the French Directory.—*Editor.*

enemy to prolong the war, admitted of no other direct interpretation than that something was rotten in the Council of Five Hundred. The evidence of circumstances became every day too visible not to be seen, and too strong to be explained away. Even as errors (to say no worse of them), they are not entitled to apology; for where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.

The more serious republicans, who had better opportunities than the generality had, of knowing the state of politics, began to take the alarm, and formed themselves into a society, by the name of the Constitutional Club. It is the only society of which I have been a member in France; and I went to this because it was become necessary that the friends of the Republic should rally round the standard of the Constitution. I met there several of the original patriots of the Revolution; I do not mean of the last order of Jacobins, but of the first of that name.

The faction in the Council of Five Hundred, who, finding no counsel from the public, began to be frightened at appearances, fortified itself against the dread of this society, by passing a law to dissolve it. The constitutionality of the law was at least doubtful: but the society, that it might not give the example of

exasperating matters already too much inflamed, suspended its meetings.

A matter, however, of much greater moment soon after presented itself. It was the march of four regiments, some of whom, in the line of their route, had to pass within about twelve leagues of Paris, which is the boundary the Constitution had fixed as the distance of any armed force from the legislative body.

In another state of things, such a circumstance would not have been noticed. But conspiracy is quick of suspicion, and the fear which the faction in the Council of Five Hundred manifested upon this occasion could not have suggested itself to innocent men; neither would innocent men have expostulated with the Directory upon the case in the manner these men did.

The question they urged went to extort from the Directory, and to make known to the enemy, what the destination of the troops was. The leaders of the faction conceived that the troops were marching against them; and the conduct they adopted in consequence of it was sufficient to justify the measure, even if it had been so. From what other motive than the consciousness of their own designs could they have fear?

The troops, in every instance, had been the gallant defenders of the Republic, and the openly declared friends of the Constitution; the Directory had been the same, and if the faction were not of a different description neither fear nor suspicion could have had place among them.

All those maneuvers in the Council were acted under the most professional attachment to the Constitution; and this as necessarily served to enfeeble their projects. It is exceedingly difficult, and next to impossible, to conduct a conspiracy, and still more so to give it success, in a popular government.

The disguised and feigned pretenses which men in such cases are obliged to act in the face of the public, suppress the action of the faculties, and give even to natural courage the features of timidity. They are not half the men they would be where no disguise is necessary. It is impossible to be a hypocrite and to be brave at the same instant.

The faction, by the imprudence of its measures, upon the march of the troops, and upon the declarations of the officers and soldiers to support the Republic and the Constitution against all open or concealed attempts to overturn them, had gotten itself involved with the army, and in effect declared itself a party against it.

On the one hand, laws were proposed to admit emigrants and refractory priests as free citizens; and on the other hand to exclude the troops from Paris, and to punish the soldiers who had declared to support the Republic. In the meantime all negotiations for peace went backward; and the enemy, still recruiting its forces, rested to take advantage of circumstances. Excepting the absence of hostilities, it was a state worse than war.

If all this was not a conspiracy, it had at least the features of one, and was pregnant with the same mischiefs. The eyes of the faction could not avoid being open to the dangers to which it obstinately exposed the Republic; yet still it persisted. During this scene, the journals devoted to the faction were repeatedly announcing the near approach of peace with Austria and with England, and often asserting that it was concluded. This falsehood could be intended for no other purpose than to keep the eyes of the people shut against the dangers to which they were exposed.

Taking all circumstances together, it was impossible that such a state of things could continue long; and at length it was resolved to bring it to an issue. There is good reason to believe that the affair of the eighteenth Fructidor (September fourth) was intended to have taken place two days before; but on

recollecting that it was the second of September, a day mournful in the annals of the Revolution, it was postponed. When the issue arrived, the faction found to its cost it had no party among the public. It had sought its own disasters, and was left to suffer the consequences.

Foreign enemies, as well as those of the interior, if any such there be, ought to see in the event of this day that all expectation of aid from any part of the public in support of a counter revolution is delusion. In a state of security the thoughtless, who trembled at terror, may laugh at principles of liberty (for they have laughed), but it is one thing to indulge a foolish laugh, quite another thing to surrender liberty.

Considering the event of the eighteenth Fructidor in a political light, it is one of those that are justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, and it is the necessity abstracted from the event that is to be deplored. The event itself is matter of joy. Whether the maneuvers in the Council of Five Hundred were the conspiracy of a few, aided by the perverseness of many, or whether it had a deeper root, the dangers were the same.

It was impossible to go on. Everything was at stake, and all national business at a stand. The case reduced itself to a simple alternative—shall the Re-

public be destroyed by the darksome maneuvers of a faction, or shall it be preserved by an exceptional act?

During the American Revolution, and that after the state constitutions were established, particular cases arose that rendered it necessary to act in a manner that would have been treasonable in a state of peace.

At one time Congress invested General Washington with dictatorial power. At another time the government of Pennsylvania suspended itself and declared martial law. It was the necessity of the times only that made the apology of those extraordinary measures. But who was it that produced the necessity of an extraordinary measure in France? A faction, and that in the face of prosperity and success. Its conduct is without apology; and it is on the faction only that the exceptional measure has fallen. The public has suffered no inconvenience.

If there are some men more disposed than others not to act severely, I have a right to place myself in that class; the whole of my political life invariably proves it; yet I cannot see, taking all parts of the case together, what else, or what better, could have been done, than has been done. It was a great stroke, applied in a great crisis, that crushed in an instant,

and without the loss of a life, all the hopes of the enemy, and restored tranquillity to the interior.

The event was ushered in by the discharge of two cannon at four in the morning, and was the only noise that was heard throughout the day. It naturally excited a movement among the Parisians to inquire the cause. They soon learned it, and the countenance they carried was easy to be interpreted.

It was that of a people who, for some time past, had been oppressed with apprehensions of some direful event, and who felt themselves suddenly relieved, by finding what it was. Everyone went about his business, or followed his curiosity in quietude. It resembled the cheerful tranquillity of the day when Louis XVI absconded in 1791, and like that day it served to open the eyes of the nation.

If we take a review of the various events, as well conspiracies as commotions, that have succeeded each other in this Revolution, we shall see how the former have wasted consumptively away, and the consequences of the latter have softened. The thirty-first May and its consequences were terrible. That of the ninth and tenth Thermidor, though glorious for the Republic, as it overthrew one of the most horrid and cruel despotisms that ever raged, was nevertheless

marked with many circumstances of severe and continued retaliation.

The commotions of Germinal and Prairial of the year 3, and of Vendémiaire of the year 4, were many degrees below those that preceded them, and affected but a small part of the public. This of Pichegru and his associates has been crushed in an instant, without the stain of blood, and without involving the public in the least inconvenience.

These events taken in a series mark the progress of the Republic from disorder to stability. The contrary of this is the case in all parts of the British dominions. There, commotions are on an ascending scale; everyone is higher than the former. That of the sailors had nearly been the overthrow of the Government. But the most potent of all is the invisible commotion in the Bank. It works with the silence of time, and the certainty of death. Everything happening in France is curable; but this is beyond the reach of nature or invention.

Leaving the event of the eighteenth Fructidor to justify itself by the necessity that occasioned it, and glorify itself by the happiness of its consequences, I come to cast a *coup-d'œil* on the present state of affairs.

We have seen by the lingering condition of the negotiations for peace, that nothing was to be expected from them, in the situation that things stood prior to the eighteenth Fructidor. The armies had done wonders, but those wonders were rendered unproductive by the wretched maneuvers of a faction.

New exertions are now necessary to repair the mischiefs which that faction has done. The electoral bodies, in some departments, who by an injudicious choice, or a corrupt influence, have sent improper deputies to the Legislature, have some atonement to make to their country. The evil originated with them, and the least they can do is to be among the foremost to repair it.

It is, however, in vain to lament an evil that is past. There is neither manhood nor policy in grief; and it often happens that an error in politics, like an error in war, admits of being turned to greater advantage than if it had not occurred. The enemy, encouraged by that error, presumes too much, and becomes doubly foiled by the reaction.

England, unable to conquer, has stooped to corrupt; and defeated in the last, as in the first, she is in a worse condition than before. Continually increasing her crimes, she increases the measure of her atonement, and multiplies the sacrifices she must make to

obtain peace. Nothing but the most obstinate stupidity could have induced her to let slip the opportunity when it was within her reach. In addition to the prospect of new expenses, she is now, to use Mr. Pitt's own figurative expression against France, *not only on the brink, but in the gulf of bankruptcy*. There is no longer any mystery in paper money. Call it assignats, mandats, exchequer bills, or bank notes, it is still the same. Time has solved the problem, and experience has fixed its fate.

The Government of that unfortunate country discovers its faithlessness so much that peace on any terms with her is scarcely worth obtaining. Of what use is peace with a government that will employ that peace for no other purpose than to repair, as far as it is possible, her shattered finances and broken credit, and then go to war again?

Four times within the last ten years, from the time the American War closed, has the Anglo-Germanic Government of England been meditating fresh war. First with France on account of Holland, in 1787; afterwards with Russia; then with Spain, on account of Nootka Sound; and a second time against France, to overthrow her Revolution. Sometimes that Government employs Prussia against Austria; at another time Austria against Prussia; and always one or the

other, or both against France. Peace with such a government is only a treacherous cessation of hostilities.

The frequency of wars on the part of England, within the last century, more than before, must have had some cause that did not exist prior to that epoch. It is not difficult to discover what that cause is. It is the mischievous compound of an elector of the Germanic body and a king of England; and which necessarily must, at some day or other, become an object of attention to France.

That one nation has not a right to interfere in the *internal* government of another nation, is admitted; and in this point of view, France has no right to dictate to England what its form of government shall be. If it choose to have a thing called a king, or whether that king shall be a man or an ass, is a matter with which France has no business. But whether an elector of the Germanic body shall be king of England, is an *external* case, with which France and every other nation who suffers inconvenience and injury in consequence of it has a right to interfere.

It is from this mischievous compound of elector and king that originates a great part of the troubles that vex the Continent of Europe; and with respect to England, it has been the cause of her immense national debt, the ruin of her finances, and the insol-

vency of her bank. All intrigues on the Continent, in which England is a party, or becomes involved, are generated by, and act through, the medium of this Anglo-Germanic compound. It will be necessary to dissolve it. Let the elector retire to his electorate, and the world will have peace.

England herself has given examples of interference in matters of this kind, and that in cases where injury was only apprehended. She engaged in a long and expensive war against France (called the Succession War) to prevent a grandson of Louis XIV being King of Spain; because, said she, *it will be injurious* to me; and she has been fighting and intriguing against what was called the family-compact ever since.

In 1787 she threatened France with war to prevent a connection between France and Holland; and in all her propositions of peace to-day she is dictating separations. But if she look at the Anglo-Germanic compact at home, called the Hanover Succession, she cannot avoid seeing that France necessarily must, some day or other, take up that subject and make the return of the elector to his electorate one of the conditions of peace. There will be no lasting peace between the two countries till this be done, and the sooner it be done the better will it be for both.

I have not been in any company where this matter has been a topic, that did not see it in the light it is here stated. Even Barthélemy,[1] when he first came to the Directory (and Barthélemy was never famous for patriotism) acknowledged in my hearing, and in company with Derché, secretary to the legation at Lille, the connection of an elector of Germany and a king of England to be injurious to France. I do not, however, mention it from a wish to embarrass the negotiation for peace. The Directory has fixed its *ultimatum;* but if that ultimatum be rejected, the obligation to adhere to it is discharged, and a new one may be assumed.

So wretchedly has Pitt managed his opportunities that every succeeding negotiation has ended in terms more against him than the former. If the Directory had bribed him, he could not serve his interest better than he does. He serves it as Lord North served that of America, which finished in the discharge of his master.*

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[1] Marquis François de Barthélemy became a member of the Directory in June, 1796, through royalist influence. He was banished with Pichegru, whose fortunes he shared later in becoming an agent of Louis XVIII.—*Editor.*

* The father of Pitt, when a member of the House of Commons, exclaiming one day, during a former war, against the enormous and ruinous expense of German connections, as the

Thus far I had written when the negotiation at Lille became suspended, in consequence of which I delayed the publication, that the ideas suggested in this letter might not intrude themselves during the interval. The *ultimatum* offered by the Directory, as the terms of peace, was more moderate than the Government of England had a right to expect. That Government, though the provoker of the war, and the first that committed hostilities by sending away the Ambassador Chauvelin,† had formerly talked of demanding from France, *indemnification for the past and security for the future.*

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offspring of the Hanover Succession, and borrowing a metaphor from the story of Prometheus, cried out: *"Thus, like Prometheus, is Britain chained to the barren rock of Hanover, whilst the imperial eagle preys upon her vitals."—Author.*

† It was stipulated in the treaty of commerce between France and England, concluded at Paris, that the sending away an ambassador by either party, should be taken as an act of hostility by the other party. The declaration of war (February [1], 1793) by the Convention, of which I was then a member and know well the case, was made in exact conformity to this article in the treaty; for it was not a declaration of war against England, but a declaration that the French Republic is *in* war with England; the first act of hostility having been committed by England. The declaration was made immediately on Chauvelin's return to France, and in consequence of it. Mr. Pitt should inform himself of things better than he does, before he prates so much about them, or of the sending away of Malmesbury, who was only on a visit of permission.—*Author.*

France, in her turn, might have retorted, and demanded the same from England; but she did not. As it was England that, in consequence of her bankruptcy, solicited peace, France offered it to her on the simple condition of her restoring the islands she had taken. The *ultimatum* has been rejected, and the negotiation broken off. The spirited part of France will say, *tant mieux,* so much the better.

How the people of England feel on the breaking up of the negotiation, which was entirely the act of their own Government, is best known to themselves; but from what I know of the two nations, France ought to hold herself perfectly indifferent about a peace with the Government of England. Every day adds new strength to France and new embarrassments to her enemy. The resources of the one increase, as those of the other become exhausted.

England is now reduced to the same system of paper money from which France has emerged, and we all know the inevitable fate of that system. It is not a victory over a few ships, like that on the coast of Holland, that gives the least support or relief to a paper system. On the news of this victory arriving in England, the funds did not rise a farthing. The Government rejoiced, but its creditors were silent.

It is difficult to find a motive, except in folly and madness, for the conduct of the English Government. Every calculation and prediction of Mr. Pitt has turned out directly the contrary; yet still he predicts. He predicted, with all the solemn assurance of a magician, that France would be bankrupt in a few months. He was right as to the thing, but wrong as to the place, for the bankruptcy happened in England while the words were yet warm upon his lips. To find out what will happen, it is only necessary to know what Mr. Pitt predicts. He is a true prophet if taken in the reverse.

Such is the ruinous condition that England is now in, that great as the difficulties of war are to the people, the difficulties that would accompany peace are equally as great to the Government. While the war continues, Mr. Pitt has a pretense for shutting up the Bank. But as that pretense could last no longer than the war lasted, he dreads the peace that would expose the absolute bankruptcy of the Government, and unveil to a deceived nation the ruinous effect of his measures. Peace would be a day of accounts to him, and he shuns it as an insolvent debtor shuns a meeting of his creditors. War furnishes him with many pretenses; peace would furnish him with none, and he stands alarmed at its consequences.

His conduct in the negotiation at Lille can be easily interpreted. It is not for the sake of the nation that he asks to retain some of the taken islands; for what are islands to a nation that has already too many for her own good, or what are they in comparison to the expense of another campaign in the present depreciating state of the English funds? (And even then those islands must be restored.)

No, it is not for the sake of the nation that he asks. It is for the sake of himself. It is as if he said to France, Give me some pretense, cover me from disgrace when my day of reckoning comes!

Any person acquainted with the English Government knows that every minister has some dread of what is called in England the winding up of accounts at the end of a war; that is, the final settlement of all expenses incurred by the war; and no minister had ever so great cause of dread as Mr. Pitt. A burnt child dreads the fire, and Pitt has had some experience upon this case.

The winding up of accounts at the end of the American War was so great that, though he was not the cause of it, and came into the Ministry with great popularity, he lost it all by undertaking, what was impossible for him to avoid, the voluminous business of the winding up. If such was the case in settling the

accounts of his predecessor, how much more has he to apprehend when the accounts to be settled are his own? All men in bad circumstances hate the settlement of accounts, and Pitt, as a minister, is of that description.

But let us take a view of things on a larger ground than the case of a minister. It will then be found that England, on a comparison of strength with France, when both nations are disposed to exert their utmost, has no possible chance of success. The efforts that England made within the last century were not generated on the ground of *natural ability*, but of *artificial anticipations*. She ran posterity into debt, and swallowed up in one generation the resources of several generations yet to come, till the project can be pursued no longer.

It is otherwise in France. The vastness of her territory and her population render the burden easy that would make a bankrupt of a country like England.

It is not the weight of a thing, but the numbers who are to bear that weight, that makes it feel light or heavy to the shoulders of those who bear it. A land-tax of half as much in the pound as the land-tax is in England, will raise nearly four times as much revenue in France as is raised in England. This is a scale

easily understood, by which all the other sections of productive revenue can be measured. Judge then of the difference of natural ability.

England is strong in a navy; but that navy costs about eight millions sterling a year, and is one of the causes that has hastened her bankruptcy. The history of navy bills sufficiently proves this. But strong as England is in this case, the fate of navies must finally be decided by the natural ability of each country to carry its navy to the greatest extent; and France is able to support a navy twice as large as that of England, with less than half the expense per head on the people, which the present navy of England costs.

We all know that a navy cannot be raised as expeditiously as an army. But as the average duration of a navy, taking the decay of time, storms and all circumstances and accidents together, is less than twenty years, every navy must be renewed within that time; and France at the end of a few years, can create and support a navy of double the extent of that of England; and the conduct of the English Government will provoke her to it.

But of what use are navies otherwise than to make or prevent invasions? Commercially considered, they are losses. They scarcely give any protection to the commerce of the countries which have them, com-

pared with the expense of maintaining them, and they insult the commerce of the nations that are neutral.

During the American War, the plan of the armed neutrality was formed and put in execution; but it was inconvenient, expensive, and ineffectual. This being the case, the problem is, does not commerce contain within itself, the means of its own protection? It certainly does, if the neutral nations will employ that means properly.

Instead then of an *armed neutrality*, the plan should be directly the contrary. It should be an *unarmed neutrality*. In the first place, the rights of neutral nations are easily defined. They are such as are exercised by nations in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, and which ought not, and cannot of right, be interrupted in consequence of war breaking out between any two or more of them.

Taking this as a principle, the next thing is to give it effect. The plan of the armed neutrality was to effect it by threatening war; but an unarmed neutrality can effect it by much easier and more powerful means.

Were the neutral nations to associate, under an honorable injunction of fidelity to each other, and publicly declare to the world that if any belligerent

power shall seize or molest any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing that association, that the whole association will shut its ports against the flag of the offending nation, and will not permit any goods, wares or merchandise, produced or manufactured in the offending nation, or appertaining thereto, to be imported into any of the ports included in the association, until reparation be made to the injured party—the reparation to be three times the value of the vessel and cargo—and moreover that all remittances on money, goods and bills of exchange, do cease to be made to the offending nation, until the said reparation be made: were the neutral nations only to do this, which it is their direct interest to do, England, as a nation depending on the commerce of neutral nations in time of war, dare not molest them, and France would not.

But while, from the want of a common system, they individually permit England to do it, because individually they cannot resist it, they put France under the necessity of doing the same thing. The supreme of all laws, in all cases, is that of self-preservation.

As the commerce of neutral nations would thus be protected by the means that commerce naturally contains within itself, all the naval operations of France

and England would be confined within the circle of acting against each other; and in that case it needs no spirit of prophecy to discover that France must finally prevail. The sooner this be done, the better will it be for both nations, and for all the world.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE RECALL OF MONROE

MONROE, like Edmund Randolph and Paine himself, was sacrificed to the new commercial alliance between Great Britain and the United States. The Washington Cabinet was hostile to France, and the determination of President Washington to recall Monroe from Paris was furthered by Gouverneur Morris, still in Europe, who wrote Washington calumnious letters about his successor as American Minister to France. In one dated December 19, 1795, Morris had told Washington that he had heard from a trusted informant that Monroe had said to several Frenchmen that "he had no doubt but that, if they would do what was proper here, he and his friends would turn out Washington."

The recall, dated August 22, 1796, reached Monroe early in November. On his return to America, in 1797, Monroe tried in vain to discover the reason for it. This letter, dated September 27, of that year, was addressed to the editors of the "Bien-informé" ("Well-informed").

CITIZENS: In your nineteenth number of the complimentary fifth, you gave an analysis of the letters of James Monroe to Timothy Pickering. The newspapers of Paris and the departments have copied this correspondence between the Ambassador of the United States and the Secretary of State. I notice, however, that a few of them have omitted some important facts, while indulging in comments of such an extraordinary nature that it is clear they know neither Monroe's integrity nor the intrigues of Pitt in this affair. The recall of Monroe is connected with circumstances so important to the interests of France

and the United States that we must be careful not to confound it with the recall of an ordinary individual. The Washington faction had affected to spread it abroad that James Monroe was the cause of rupture between the two Republics.

This accusation is a perfidious and calumnious one; since the main point in this affair is not so much the recall of a worthy, enlightened and Republican Minister, as the ingratitude and clandestine maneuvering of the Government of Washington, who caused the misunderstanding by signing a treaty injurious to the French Republic.

James Monroe, in his letters, does not deny the right of government to withdraw its confidence from any one of its delegates, representatives or agents. He has hinted, it is true, that caprice and temper are not in accordance with the spirit of paternal rule, and that whenever a representative government punishes or rewards good faith, integrity and justice should replace *the good pleasure of kings.*

In the present case they have done more than recall an agent. Had they confined themselves to depriving him of his appointment, James Monroe would have kept silence; but he has been accused of lighting the torch of discord in both Republics. The refutation of this absurd and infamous reproach is the chief

object of his correspondence. If he did not immediately complain of these slanders in his letters of the sixth and eighth [July], it is because he wished to use at first a certain degree of caution, and, if it were possible, to stifle intestine troubles at their birth. He wished to reopen the way to peaceful negotiations to be conducted with good faith and justice.

The arguments of the Secretary of State on the rights of the supreme administration of the United States are peremptory; but the observations of Monroe on the hidden causes of his recall are touching; they come from the heart; they are characteristic of an excellent citizen.

If he does more than complain of his unjust recall as a man of feeling would; if he proudly asks for proofs of a grave accusation, it is after he has tried in vain every honest and straightforward means. He will not suffer that a government, sold to the enemies of freedom, should discharge upon him its shame, its crimes, its ingratitude, and all the odium of its unjust dealings.

Were Monroe to find himself an object of public hatred, the Republican party in the United States, that party which is the sincere ally of France, would be annihilated, and this is the aim of the English Government.

Imagine the triumph of Pitt, if Monroe and the other friends of freedom in America, should be unjustly attacked in France!

Monroe does not lay his cause before the Senate since the Senate itself ratified the unconstitutional treaty; he appeals to the House of Representatives, and at the same time lays his cause before the upright tribunal of the American nation.

PRIVATE LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON

DATED PARIS, OCTOBER 1, 1800.

THE "Dublin Packet" mentioned here by Paine was intercepted and searched by a British cruiser, whose captain had orders to capture and transport Paine to England. Apropos of the mention made in the first paragraph of this letter, of Paine's gratification that Jefferson had accepted the Vice-Presidency in the Adams Administration, it is interesting to recall that about the time this letter reached America another Presidential election had resulted in a tie between Jefferson and Burr. The decision fell to Congress, and Jefferson was chosen.

The American commissioners to France, whom Paine alludes to as "Ellsworth and company," were Oliver Ellsworth, who had just concluded a four-year term as Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court; W. V. Murray and W. R. Davie. President Adams had sent them to France to negotiate a treaty that was signed September 30, 1800. Its authorship was largely the work of Murray.

DEAR SIR—I wrote to you from Havre by the ship *Dublin Packet* in the year 1797. It was then my intention to return to America; but there were so many British frigates cruising in sight of the port, and which after a few days knew that I was at Havre waiting to go to America, that I did not think it best to trust myself to their discretion, and the more so, as I had no confidence in the captain of the *Dublin Packet* (Clay). I mentioned to you in that letter, which I believe you received through the hands of Colonel [Aaron] Burr, that I was glad since you were not President that you had accepted the nomination of Vice-President.

The commissioners, Ellsworth and company, have been here about eight months, and three more useless mortals never came upon public business. Their presence appears to me to have been rather an injury than a benefit. They set themselves up for a faction as soon as they arrived. I was then in Belgia. Upon my return to Paris I learned they had made a point of not returning the visits of Mr. Skipwith and Barlow, because, they said, they had not the confidence of the Executive. Every known Republican was treated in the same manner.

I learned from Mr. Miller of Philadelphia, who had occasion to see them upon business, that they did not intend to return my visit, if I made one. This, I supposed, it was intended I should know, that I might not make one. It had the contrary effect. I went to see Mr. Ellsworth. I told him I did not come to see him as a commissioner, nor to congratulate him upon his mission; that I came to see him because I had formerly known him in Congress.

"I mean not," said I, "to press you with any questions, or to engage you in any conversation upon the business you are come upon, but I will nevertheless candidly say that I know not what expectations the Government or the people of America may have of your mission, or what expectations you may have

yourselves, but I believe you will find you can do but little. The treaty with England lies at the threshold of all your business. The American Government never did two more foolish things than when it signed that treaty and recalled Mr. Monroe, who was the only man could do them any service."

Mr. Ellsworth put on the dull gravity of a judge, and was silent. I added, "You may perhaps make a treaty like that you have made with England, which is a surrender of the rights of the American flag; for the principle that neutral ships make neutral property must be general or not at all." I then changed the subject, for I had all the talk to myself upon this topic, and inquired after Samuel Adams (I asked nothing about John), Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Monroe and others of my friends; and the melancholy case of the yellow fever—of which he gave me as circumstantial an account as if he had been summing up a case to a jury.

Here my visit ended, and had Mr. Ellsworth been as cunning as a statesman, or as wise as a judge, he would have returned my visit that he might appear insensible of the intention of mine.

I now come to the affairs of this country and of Europe. You will, I suppose, have heard before this arrives to you of the battle of Marengo in Italy, where

the Austrians were defeated—of the armistice in consequence thereof, and the surrender of Milan, Genoa, etc., to the French—of the successes of the French Army in Germany—and the extension of the armistice in that quarter—of the preliminaries of peace signed at Paris—of the refusal of the Emperor [of Austria] to ratify these preliminaries—of the breaking of the armistice by the French Government in consequence of that refusal—of the "gallant" expedition of the Emperor to put himself at the head of his army—of his pompous arrival there—of his having made his will—of prayers being put in all his churches for the preservation of the life of this hero —of General Moreau announcing to him, immediately on his arrival at the army, that hostilities would commence the day after the next at sunrise unless he signed the treaty or gave security that he would sign within forty-five days—of his surrendering up three of the principal keys of Germany (Ulm, Philipsburg, and Ingolstadt) as security that he would sign them.

This is the state things are now in, at the time of writing this letter; but it is proper to add that the refusal of the Emperor to sign the preliminaries was motived upon a note from the King of England to be admitted to the Congress for negotiating peace,

which was consented to by the French upon the condition of an armistice at sea, which England, before knowing of the surrender the Emperor had made, had refused.

From all which it appears to me, judging from circumstances, that the Emperor is now so completely in the hands of the French, that he has no way of getting out but by a peace. The Congress for the peace is to be held at Lunéville, a town in France. Since the affair of Rastadt the French commissioners will not trust themselves with the Emperor's territory.

I now come to domestic affairs. I know not what the commissioners have done, but from a paper I inclose to you, which appears to have some authority, it is not much. The paper as you will perceive is considerably prior to this letter. I know that the commissioners before this piece appeared intended setting off. It is therefore probable that what they have done is conformable to what this paper mentions, which certainly will not atone for the expense their mission has incurred, neither are they, by all the accounts I hear of them, men fitted for the business.

But independently of these matters there appears to be a state of circumstances rising, which if it goes on, will render all partial treaties unnecessary. In the first place I doubt if any peace will be made with

England; and in the second place, I should not wonder to see a coalition formed against her, to compel her to abandon her insolence on the seas. This brings me to speak of the manuscripts I send you.

The piece No. 1, without any title, was written in consequence of a question put to me by Bonaparte. As he supposed I knew England and English politics he sent a person to me to ask, that in case of negotiating a peace with Austria, whether it would be proper to include England. This was when Count St. Julian was in Paris, on the part of the Emperor negotiating the preliminaries:—which as I have before said the Emperor refused to sign on the pretense of admitting England.

The piece No. 2, entitled "On the Jacobinism of the English at Sea," was written when the English made their insolent and impolitic expedition to Denmark, and is also an auxiliary to the politic of No. 1. I showed it to a friend [Bonneville] who had it translated into French and printed in the form of a pamphlet, and distributed gratis among the foreign ministers and persons in the government. It was immediately copied into several of the French journals, and into the official paper, the *Moniteur*. It appeared in this paper one day before the last despatch arrived from Egypt; which agreed perfectly

with what I had said respecting Egypt. It hit the two cases of Denmark and Egypt in the exact proper moment.

The piece No. 3, entitled "Compact Maritime," is the sequel of No. 2, digested in form. It is translating at the time I write this letter, and I am to have a meeting with the Senator Garat upon the subject. The pieces 2 and 3 go off in manuscript to England, by a confidential person, where they will be published.

By all the news we get from the North there appears to be something meditating against England. It is now given for certain that Paul has embargoed all the English vessels and English property in Russia till some principle be established for protecting the rights of neutral nations, and securing the liberty of the seas.

The preparations in Denmark continue, notwithstanding the convention that she has made with England, which leaves the question with respect to the right set up by England to stop and search neutral vessels undecided. I send you the paragraphs upon the subject.

The tumults are great in all parts of England on account of the excessive price of corn and bread, which has risen since the harvest. I attribute it more to the abundant increase of paper, and the non-circu-

lation of cash, than to any other cause. People in trade can push the paper off as fast as they receive it, as they did by Continental money in America; but as farmers have not this opportunity they endeavor to secure themselves by going considerably in advance.

I have now given you all the great articles of intelligence, for I trouble not myself with little ones, and consequently not with the commissioners, nor anything they are about, nor with John Adams, otherwise than to wish him safe home, and a better and wiser man in his place.

In the present state of circumstances and the prospects arising from them, it may be proper for America to consider whether it is worth her while to enter into any treaty at this moment, or to wait the event of those circumstances which if they go on will render partial treaties useless by deranging them.

But if, in the meantime, she enters into any treaty it ought to be with a condition to the following purpose: Reserving to herself the right of joining in an association of nations for the protection of the rights of neutral commerce and the security of the liberty of the seas.

The pieces 2, 3, may go to the press. They will make a small pamphlet and the printers are welcome

to put my name to it. (It is best it should be put.) From thence they will get into the newspapers. I know that the faction of John Adams abuses me pretty heartily. They are welcome. It does not disturb me, and they lose their labor; and in return for it I am doing America more service, as a neutral nation, than their expensive commissioners can do, and she has that service from me for nothing. The piece No. 1 is only for your own amusement and that of your friends.

I come now to speak confidentially to you on a private subject. When Mr. Ellsworth and Davie return to America, Murray will return to Holland, and in that case there will be nobody in Paris but Mr. Skipwith that has been in the habit of transacting business with the French Government since the Revolution began.

He is on a good standing with them, and if the chance of the day should place you in the Presidency you cannot do better than appoint him for any purpose you may have occasion for in France. He is an honest man and will do his country justice, and that with civility and good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with; a faculty which that Northern Bear, Timothy Pickering, wanted, and

which the Bear of that Bear, John Adams, never possessed.

I know not much of Mr. Murray, otherwise than of his unfriendliness to every American who is not of his faction, but I am sure that Joel Barlow is a much fitter man to be in Holland than Mr. Murray. It is upon the fitness of the man to the place that I speak, for I have not communicated a thought upon the subject to Barlow, neither does he know, at the time of my writing this (for he is at Havre), that I have intention to do it.

I will now, by way of relief, amuse you with some account of the progress of iron bridges. . . .

I have now made two other models [of bridges].[1] One is pasteboard, five feet span and five inches of height from the cords. It is in the opinion of every person who has seen it one of the most beautiful objects the eye can behold. I then cast a model in metal following the construction of that in pasteboard and of the same dimensions. The whole was executed in my own chamber. It is far superior in strength, elegance and readiness in execution to the model I

[1] Eventually these models attracted much favorable attention in Washington and Philadelphia. They were long exhibited at Peale's Museum in Philadelphia, but have disappeared.—*Editor.*

made in America, and which you saw in Paris. I shall bring those models with me when I come home, which will be as soon as I can pass the seas in safety from the piratical John Bulls.

I suppose you have seen, or have heard of the Bishop of Llandaff's answer to my second part of "The Age of Reason." As soon as I got a copy of it I began a third part, which served also as an answer to the Bishop; but as soon as the clerical Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge knew of my intention to answer the Bishop, they prosecuted, as a society, the printer of the first and second parts, to prevent that answer appearing.

No other reason than this can be assigned for their prosecuting at the time they did, because the first part had been in circulation above three years and the second part more than one, and they prosecuted immediately on knowing that I was taking up their champion.

The Bishop's answer, like Mr. Burke's attack on the French Revolution, served me as a back-ground to bring forward other subjects upon, with more advantage than if the back-ground was not there. This is the motive that induced me to answer him, otherwise I should have gone on without taking any notice of him. I have made and am still making additions

to the manuscript, and shall continue to do so till an opportunity arrive for publishing it.

If any American frigate should come to France, and the direction of it fall to you, I will be glad you would give me the opportunity of returning. The abscess under which I suffered almost two years is entirely healed of itself, and I enjoy exceeding good health. This is the first of October, and Mr. Skipwith has just called to tell me the commissioners set off for Havre to-morrow. This will go by the frigate but not with the knowledge of the commissioners. Remember me with much affection to my friends and accept the same to yourself.

THOMAS PAINE.

PROPOSAL THAT LOUISIANA BE PURCHASED

SENT TO THE PRESIDENT, CHRISTMAS DAY, 1802

ON October 30, 1802, Paine landed at Baltimore, after fifteen eventful years in Europe, and proceeded to Washington City, then hardly more than a village. He was staying at Lovett's, the best, if not only, hotel the new American capital afforded, when the purchase of Louisiana was mentioned in a conversation he had with Dr. Michael Leib, Representative from Pennsylvania. Evidently Paine made the suggestion, as it is recorded that Dr. Leib was so impressed with the idea that he urged Paine to communicate it to President Jefferson.

The day after receiving this letter, the President told Paine that "measures were already taken in that business." As a matter of history, the purchase of the territory of Louisiana from France was deemed unconstitutional by Jefferson, but the necessity of controlling the Mississippi and the need of France for money, hastened the momentous transaction.

SPAIN has ceded Louisiana to France, and France has excluded Americans from New Orleans, and the navigation of the Mississippi. The people of the Western Territory have complained of it to their Government, and the Government is of consequence involved and interested in the affair. The question then is—What is the best step to be taken?

The one is to begin by memorial and remonstrance against an infraction of a right. The other is by accommodation—still keeping the right in view, but not making it a ground-work.

Suppose then the Government begin by making a proposal to France to repurchase the cession made to her by Spain, of Louisiana, provided it be with the consent of the people of Louisiana, or a majority thereof.

By beginning on this ground anything can be said without carrying the appearance of a threat. The growing power of the Western Territory can be stated as a matter of information, and also the impossibility of restraining them from seizing upon New Orleans, and the equal impossibility of France to prevent it.

Suppose the proposal attended to, the sum to be given comes next on the carpet. This, on the part of America, will be estimated between the value of the commerce and the quantity of revenue that Louisiana will produce.

The French treasury is not only empty, but the Government has consumed by anticipation a great part of the next year's revenue. A monied proposal will, I believe, be attended to; if it should, the claims upon France can be stipulated as part of the payment, and that sum can be paid here to the claimants.

——I congratulate you on *The Birthday of the New Sun*, now called Christmas Day; and I make you a present of a thought on Louisiana.

T. P.

THOMAS PAINE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES

And Particularly to the Leaders of the Federal Faction

Letter I

THIS is the first of seven letters Paine published in "The National Intelligencer" during 1802-3, following his return to America. Its date of publication was November 15, 1802. The paper, issued in Washington City, was edited by an English refugee named Gales, who in youth had been a prosecuted adherent of Paine in Sheffield, England. Having the courage of his convictions, the editor of "The National Intelligencer" dared to court a loss of subscribers by heartily welcoming back to the United States the author of "The Age of Reason," which was only less misinterpreted and misunderstood in America than in Europe.

Incidentally, Jefferson was widely criticized for befriending Paine, and especially for having invited the great pamphleteer to return to America on a national ship.

AFTER an absence of almost fifteen years, I am again returned to the country in whose dangers I bore my share, and to whose greatness I contributed my part.

When I sailed for Europe, in the spring of 1787, it was my intention to return to America the next year, and enjoy in retirement the esteem of my friends, and the repose I was entitled to. I had stood out the storm of one revolution, and had no wish to embark in another. But other scenes and other circumstances than those of contemplated ease were allotted to me.

The French Revolution was beginning to germinate when I arrived in France. The principles of it were good, they were copied from America, and the men who conducted it were honest. But the fury of faction soon extinguished the one and sent the other to the scaffold. Of those who began that Revolution, I am almost the only survivor, and that through a thousand dangers. I owe this not to the prayers of priests, nor to the piety of hypocrites, but to the continued protection of Providence.

But while I beheld with pleasure the dawn of liberty rising in Europe, I saw with regret the lustre of it fading in America. In less than two years from the time of my departure some distant symptoms painfully suggested the idea that the principles of the Revolution were expiring on the soil that produced them. I received at that time a letter from a female literary correspondent, and in my answer to her, I expressed my fears on that head.[1]

I now know from the information I obtain upon the spot, that the impressions that then distressed me, for I was proud of America, were but too well founded. She was turning her back on her own

[1] Referring to Mrs. Col. Few, née Nicholson, of Bordentown, New Jersey, and New York, with whom Paine corresponded during his sojourn in France.—*Editor.*

glory, and making hasty strides in the retrograde path of oblivion. But a spark from the altar of *Seventy-six,* unextinguished and unextinguishable through the long night of error, is again lighting up, in every part of the Union, the genuine name of rational liberty.

As the French Revolution advanced it fixed the attention of the world, and drew from the pensioned pen of Edmund Burke a furious attack. This brought me once more on the public theater of politics, and occasioned the pamphlet "Rights of Man." It had the greatest run of any work ever published in the English language. The number of copies circulated in England, Scotland and Ireland, besides translations into foreign languages, was between four and five hundred thousand.

The principles of that work were the same as those in "Common Sense," and the effects would have been the same in England as that had produced in America, could the vote of the nation been quietly taken, or had equal opportunities of consulting or acting existed. The only difference between the two works was that the one was adapted to the local circumstances of England, and the other to those of America.

As to myself, I acted in both cases alike; I relinquished to the people of England, as I had done to

those of America, all profits from the work. My reward existed in the ambition to do good, and the independent happiness of my own mind.

But a faction, acting in disguise, was rising in America; they had lost sight of first principles. They were beginning to contemplate government as a profitable monopoly, and the people as hereditary property. It is, therefore, no wonder that the "Rights of Man" was attacked by that faction, and its author continually abused. But let them go on; give them rope enough and they will put an end to their own insignificance. There is too much common sense and independence in America to be long the dupe of any faction, foreign or domestic.

But, in the midst of the freedom we enjoy, the licentiousness of the papers called Federal (and I know not why they are called so, for they are in their principles anti-federal and despotic), is a dishonor to the character of the country, and an injury to its reputation and importance abroad. They represent the whole people of America as destitute of public principle and private manners.

As to any injury they can do at home to those whom they abuse, or service they can render to those who employ them, it is to be set down to the account of noisy nothingness. It is on themselves the dis-

grace recoils, for the reflection easily presents itself to every thinking mind, that *those who abuse liberty when they possess it would abuse power could they obtain it;* and, therefore, they may as well take as a general motto, for all such papers, *We and our patrons are not fit to be trusted with power.*

There is in America, more than in any other country, a large body of people who attend quietly to their farms, or follow their several occupations; who pay no regard to the clamors of anonymous scribblers, who think for themselves, and judge of government, not by the fury of newspaper writers, but by the prudent frugality of its measures, and the encouragement it gives to the improvement and prosperity of the country; and who, acting on their own judgment, never come forward in an election but on some important occasion.

When this body moves, all the little barkings of scribbling and witless curs pass for nothing. To say to this independent description of men, "You must turn out such and such persons at the next election, for they have taken off a great many taxes, and lessened the expenses of government, they have dismissed my son, or my brother, or myself, from a lucrative office, in which there was nothing to do"—

is to show the cloven foot of faction, and preach the language of ill-disguised mortification.

In every part of the Union, this faction is in the agonies of death, and in proportion as its fate approaches, gnashes its teeth and struggles. My arrival has struck it as with an hydrophobia, it is like the sight of water to canine madness.

As this letter is intended to announce my arrival to my friends, and to my enemies if I have any, for I ought to have none in America, and as introductory to others that will occasionally follow, I shall close it by detailing the line of conduct I shall pursue.

I have no occasion to ask, and do not intend to accept, any place or office in the Government. There is none it could give me that would be any ways equal to the profits I could make as an author, for I have an established fame in the literary world, could I reconcile it to my principles to make money by my politics or religion. I must be in everything what I have ever been, a disinterested volunteer; my proper sphere of action is on the common floor of citizenship, and to honest men I give my hand and my heart freely.

I have some manuscript works to publish, of which I shall give proper notice, and some mechanical affairs to bring forward, that will employ all my leisure time. I shall continue these letters as I see occasion, and

as to the low party prints that choose to abuse me, they are welcome; I shall not descend to answer them. I have been too much used to such common stuff to take any notice of it.

The Government of England honored me with a thousand martyrdoms, by burning me in effigy in every town in that country, and their hirelings in America may do the same.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington.

LETTER II

IN THIS letter, published November 22, 1802, Paine attacks ex-President John Adams as being, at heart, an enemy of the Republican form of government, and he consistently assails the Federalist Party doctrines as inimical to the United States. His attack was in the nature of a self-defense, in that the Hamiltonian Federalists, who had been defeated by the Jeffersonian Republicans, had trained their batteries on President Jefferson for inviting Paine to return on a national ship, under escort of a Congressman, John Dawson of Virginia. "The Age of Reason" was an inviting target, and Jefferson was troubled at finding himself mixed up in the general mudslinging.

However, the denunciations of Paine were more political than religious, as evidenced by the fact that John Adams himself was not strictly orthodox. These letters impressed the country deeply—and even the Federalist press had to publish them as news of the day.

AS the affairs of the country to which I am returned are of more importance to the world, and to me, than of that I have lately left (for it is through the New World the Old must be regenerated, if regenerated at all), I shall not take up the time of the reader with an account of scenes that have passed in France, many of which are painful to remember and horrid to relate, but come at once to the circumstances in which I find America on my arrival.

Fourteen years, and something more, have produced a change, at least among a part of the people, and I ask myself what it is? I meet or hear of thousands of my former connections, who are men of the

same principles and friendships as when I left them. But a nondescript race, and of equivocal generation, assuming the name of *Federalist*—a name that describes no character of principle good or bad, and may equally be applied to either—has since started up with the rapidity of a mushroom, and like a mushroom is withering on its rootless stalk.

Are those men *federalized* to support the liberties of their country or to overturn them? To add to its fair fame or riot on its spoils? The name contains no defined idea. It is like John Adams's definition of a republic, in his letter to Mr. Wythe [1] of Virginia. *It is,* says he, *an empire of laws and not of men.* But as laws may be bad as well as good, an empire of laws may be the best of all governments or the worst of all tyrannies.

But John Adams is a man of paradoxical heresies, and consequently of a bewildered mind. He wrote a book entitled, "A Defense of the American Constitutions," and the principles of it are an attack upon them. But the book is descended to the tomb of forgetfulness, and the best fortune that can attend its author is quietly to follow its fate. John was not born for immortality. But, to return to Federalism.

[1] Chancellor George Wythe, one of the framers of the Constitution.—*Editor.*

In the history of parties and the names they assume, it often happens that they finish by the direct contrary principles with which they profess to begin, and thus it has happened with Federalism.

During the time of the old Congress, and prior to the establishment of the Federal Government, the Continental belt was too loosely buckled. The several States were united in name but not in fact, and that nominal union had neither center nor circle. The laws of one State frequently interfered with, and sometimes opposed, those of another. Commerce between State and State was without protection, and confidence without a point to rest on. The condition the country was then in was aptly described by Pelatiah Webster, when he said, "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel.*"

If, then, by *Federalist* is to be understood one who was for cementing the Union by a general government operating equally over all the States, in all matters that embraced the common interest, and to which the authority of the States severally was not adequate, for no one State can make laws to bind another; if, I say, by a *Federalist* is meant a person of this description (and this is the origin of the name), *I ought to stand first on the list of Federalists,* for the proposition for establishing a general government over the

Union, came originally from me in 1783, in a written memorial to Chancellor Livingston, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Congress, Robert Morris, Minister of Finance, and his associate, Gouverneur Morris, all of whom are now living; and we had a dinner and conference at Robert Morris's on the subject. The occasion was as follows:

Congress had proposed a duty of five per cent on imported articles, the money to be applied as a fund toward paying the interest of loans to be borrowed in Holland. The resolve was sent to the several States to be enacted into a law. Rhode Island absolutely refused. I was at the trouble of a journey to Rhode Island to reason with them on the subject. Some other of the States enacted it with alterations, each one as it pleased. Virginia adopted it, and afterwards repealed it, and the affair came to nothing.

It was then visible, at least to me, that either Congress must frame the laws necessary for the Union, and send them to the several States to be enregistered without any alteration, which would in itself appear like usurpation on one part and passive obedience on the other, or some method must be devised to accomplish the same end by constitutional principles; and the proposition I made in the memorial was, to

add a Continental legislature to Congress, to be elected by the several States.

The proposition met the full approbation of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed, and the conversation turned on the manner of bringing it forward. Gouverneur Morris, in talking with me after dinner, wished me to throw out the idea in the newspaper; I replied, that I did not like to be always the proposer of new things, that it would have too assuming an appearance; and besides, that *I did not think the country was quite wrong enough to be put right.*

I remember giving the same reason to Dr. Rush, at Philadelphia, and to General Gates, at whose quarters I spent a day on my return from Rhode Island; and I suppose they will remember it because the observation seemed to strike them.

But the embarrassments increasing, as they necessarily must from the want of a better cemented union, the State of Virginia proposed holding a commercial convention, and that convention, which was not sufficiently numerous, proposed that another convention, with more extensive and better defined powers, should be held at Philadelphia, May 10, 1787.

When the plan of the Federal Government, formed by this convention, was proposed and submitted to the consideration of the several States, it was strongly

objected to in each of them. But the objections were not on anti-Federal grounds, but on constitutional points. Many were shocked at the idea of placing what is called executive power in the hands of a single individual. To them it had too much the form and appearance of a military government, or a despotic one.

Others objected that the powers given to a President were too great, and that in the hands of an ambitious and designing man it might grow into tyranny as it did in England under Oliver Cromwell, and as it has since done in France. A republic must not only be so in its principles, but in its forms.

The executive part of the Federal Government was made for a man, and those who consented, against their judgment, to place executive power in the hands of a single individual, reposed more on the supposed moderation of the person they had in view, than on the wisdom of the measure itself.

Two considerations, however, overcame all objections. The one was the absolute necessity of a Federal Government. The other, the rational reflections, that as government in America is founded on the representative system any error in the first essay could be reformed by the same quiet and rational process by which the Constitution was formed, and that either

by the generation then living, or by those who were to succeed.

If ever America lose sight of this principle, she will no longer be the *land of liberty*. The father will become the assassin of the rights of the son, and his descendants be a race of slaves.

As many thousands who were minors are grown up to manhood since the name of *Federalist* began, it became necessary, for their information, to go back and show the origin of the name, which is now no longer what it originally was; but it was the more necessary to do this, in order to bring forward, in the open face of day, the apostasy of those who first called themselves Federalists.

To them it served as a cloak for treason, a mask for tyranny. Scarcely were they placed in the seat of power and office, than federalism was to be destroyed, and the representative system of government, the pride and glory of America, and the palladium of her liberties, was to be overthrown and abolished. The next generation was not to be free. The son was to bend his neck beneath the father's foot, and live, deprived of his rights, under hereditary control.

Among the men of this apostate description, is to be ranked the ex-President *John Adams*. It has been the political career of this man to begin with hypoc-

risy, proceed with arrogance, and finish in contempt. May such be the fate of all such characters.

I have had doubts of John Adams ever since the year 1776. In a conversation with me at that time, concerning the pamphlet "Common Sense," he censured it because it attacked the English form of government. John was for independence because he expected to be made great by it; but it was not difficult to perceive, for the surliness of his temper makes him an awkward hypocrite, that his head was as full of kings, queens and knaves, as a pack of cards. But John has lost deal.

When a man has a concealed project in his brain that he wants to bring forward, and fears will not succeed, he begins with it as physicians do by suspected poison, try it first on an animal; if it agree with the stomach of the animal he makes further experiments, and this was the way John took. His brain was teeming with projects to overturn the liberties of America and the representative system of government, and he began by hinting it in little companies.

The secretary of John Jay, an excellent painter and a poor politician, told me, in presence of another American, Daniel Parker, that in a company where himself was present, John Adams talked of making the government hereditary, and that as Mr. Washing-

ton had no children, it should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington.

John had not impudence enough to propose himself in the first instance, as the old French Normandy baron did, who offered to come over to be king of America, and if Congress did not accept his offer, that they would give him thirty thousand pounds for the generosity of it; but John, like a mole, was grubbing his way to it under ground. He knew that Lund Washington was unknown, for nobody had heard of him, and that as the President had no children to succeed him, the Vice-President had, and if the treason had succeeded, and the hint with it, the goldsmith might be sent for to take measure of the head of John or of his son for a golden wig.

In this case, the good people of Boston might have for a king the man they have rejected as a delegate. The representative system is fatal to ambition.

Knowing, as I do, the consummate vanity of John Adams, and the shallowness of his judgment, I can easily picture to myself that when he arrived at the Federal City [Washington] he was strutting in the pomp of his imagination before the presidential house, or in the audience hall, and exulting in the language of Nebuchadnezzar, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the honor of my Majesty!"

But in that unfortunate hour, or soon after, John, like Nebuchadnezzar, was driven from among men, and fled with the speed of a post-horse.

Some of John Adams's loyal subjects, I see, have been to present him with an address on his birthday; but the language they use is too tame for the occasion. Birthday addresses, like birthday odes, should not creep along like mildrops down a cabbage leaf, but roll in a torrent of poetical metaphor. I will give them a specimen for the next year. Here it is:

When an ant, in traveling over the globe, lifts up its foot, and puts it again on the ground, it shakes the earth to its center: but when YOU, the mighty Ant of the East, was born, etc., etc., etc., the center jumped upon the surface.

This, gentlemen, is the proper style of addresses from *well-bred* ants to the monarch of the ant hills; and as I never take pay for preaching, praying, politics or poetry, I make you a present of it. Some people talk of impeaching John Adams; but I am for softer measures. I would keep him to make fun of. He will then answer one of the ends for which he was born, and he ought to be thankful that I am arrived to take his part.

I voted in earnest to save the life of one unfortunate king, and I now vote in jest to save another. It is my fate to be always plagued with fools. But to return to Federalism and apostasy.

The plan of the leaders of the faction was to overthrow the liberties of the New World, and place government on the corrupt system of the Old. They wanted to hold their power by a more lasting tenure than the choice of their constituents. It is impossible to account for their conduct and the measures they adopted on any other ground.

But to accomplish that object, a standing army and a prodigal revenue must be raised; and to obtain these pretenses must be invented to deceive. Alarms of dangers that did not exist even in imagination, but in the direct spirit of lying, were spread abroad. Apostasy stalked through the land in the garb of patriotism, and the torch of treason blinded for a while the flame of liberty.

For what purpose could an army of twenty-five thousand men be wanted? A single reflection might have taught the most credulous that while the war raged between France and England, neither could spare a man to invade America. For what purpose, then, could it be wanted? The case carries its own explanation. It was wanted for the purpose of de-

stroying the representative system, for it could be employed for no other. Are these men Federalists? If they are, they are federalized to deceive and to destroy.

The rage against Dr. Logan's patriotic and voluntary mission to France was excited by the shame they felt at the detection of the false alarms they had circulated. As to the opposition given by the remnant of the faction to the repeal of the taxes laid on during the former Administration, it is easily accounted for. The repeal of those taxes was a sentence of condemnation on those who laid them on, and in the opposition they gave in that repeal they are to be considered in the light of criminals standing on their defense and the country has passed judgment upon them.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington, Lovett's Hotel,
November 19, 1802.

LETTER III

COMPARING his Federalist enemies in America to the Robespierrean terrorists of France, Paine reviews his harrowing experience in the Luxembourg prison and his miraculous escape from the guillotine. He always attributed it to a fever which rendered him unconscious at a time when his execution was demanded by Robespierre. Sampson Perry, in his book on the French Revolution, relates that shortly before Paine fell ill in prison, being apprehensive of robbery, "he hid an English bank note of some value and all the gold coin on his person inside the great lock of his cell door. Recovering his health he found his money, but missed about three hundred of his fellow prisoners, who had been sent in crowds to the murderous tribunal, while he had been insensible of their or his own danger."

Near the end of this letter, Paine accuses President Washington of callous ingratitude for not having exerted himself to have Paine released from prison.

TO ELECT, and to REJECT, is the prerogative of a free people.

Since the establishment of independence, no period has arrived that so decidedly proves the excellence of the representative system of government, and its superiority over every other, as the time we now live in. Had America been cursed with John Adams's *hereditary Monarchy*, or Alexander Hamilton's *Senate for life*, she must have sought, in the doubtful contest of civil war, what she now obtains by the expression of public will. An appeal to elections decides better than an appeal to the sword.

The Reign of Terror that raged in America during the latter end of the Washington Administration, and

the whole of that of Adams, is enveloped in mystery to me. That there were men in the Government hostile to the representative system, was once their boast, though it is now their overthrow, and therefore the fact is established against them.

But that so large a mass of the people should become the dupes of those who were loading them with taxes in order to load them with chains, and deprive them of the right of election, can be ascribed only to that species of wildfire rage, lighted up by falsehood that not only acts without reflection, but is too impetuous to make any.

There is a general and striking difference between the genuine effects of truth itself, and the effects of falsehood believed to be truth. Truth is naturally benign; but falsehood believed to be truth is always furious. The former delights in serenity, is mild and persuasive, and seeks not the auxiliary aid of invention. The latter sticks at nothing.

It has naturally no morals. Every lie is welcome that suits its purpose. It is the innate character of the thing to act in this manner, and the criterion by which it may be known, whether in politics or religion. When anything is attempted to be supported by lying it is presumptive evidence that the thing so supported

is a lie also. The stock on which a lie can be grafted must be of the same species as the graft.

What is become of the mighty clamor of French invasion, and the cry that our country is in danger, and taxes and armies must be raised to defend it? The danger is fled with the faction that created it, and what is worst of all, the money is fled too. It is I only that have committed the hostility of invasion, and all the artillery of pop-guns are prepared for action.

Poor fellows, how they foam! They set half their own partisans in laughter; for among ridiculous things nothing is more ridiculous than ridiculous rage. But I hope they will not leave off. I shall lose half my greatness when they cease to lie.

So far as respects myself, I have reason to believe and a right to say that the leaders of the Reign of Terror in America and the leaders of the Reign of Terror in France, during the time of Robespierre, were in character the same sort of men; or how is it to be accounted for, that I was persecuted by both at the same time? When I was voted out of the French Convention, the reason assigned for it was, that I was a foreigner.

When Robespierre had me seized in the night, and imprisoned in the Luxembourg (where I remained eleven months), he assigned no reason for it. But

when he proposed bringing me to the tribunal, which was like sending me at once to the scaffold, he then assigned a reason, and the reason was, *for the interests of America as well as of* France. *"Pour les interêts de l'Amérique autant que de la France."*

The words are in his own hand-writing, and reported to the Convention by the committee appointed to examine his papers, and are printed in their report, with this reflection added to them, *"Why Thomas Paine more than another? Because he contributed to the liberty of both worlds."*

There must have been a coalition in sentiment, if not in fact, between the Terrorists of America and the Terrorists of France, and Robespierre must have known it, or he could not have had the idea of putting America into the bill of accusation against me.

Yet these men, these Terrorists of the New World, who were waiting in the devotion of their hearts for the joyful news of my destruction, are the same banditti who are now bellowing in all the hackneyed language of hackneyed hypocrisy about humanity and piety, and often about something they call infidelity, and they finish with the chorus of *Crucify him, crucify him.* I am become so famous among them, they cannot eat or drink without me. I serve

them as a standing dish, and they cannot make up a bill of fare if I am not in it.

But there is one dish, and that the choicest of all, that they have not presented on the table, and it is time they should. They have not yet *accused Providence of Infidelity*. Yet according to their outrageous piety, she must be as bad as Thomas Paine; she has protected him in all his dangers, patronized him in all his undertaking, encouraged him in all his ways, and rewarded him at last by bringing him in safety and in health to the Promised Land.

This is more than she did by the Jews, the chosen people, that they tell us she brought out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; for they all died in the wilderness, and Moses too.

I was one of the nine members that composed the first Committee of Constitution. Six of them have been destroyed. Sieyès and myself have survived —he by bending with the times, and I by not bending. The other survivor joined Robespierre; he was seized and imprisoned in his turn, and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying he felt himself in danger and was obliged to do it.

Herault Sechelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppléant* as mem-

ber of the Committee of Constitution, that is, he was to supply my place, if I had not accepted or had resigned, being next in number of votes to me. He was imprisoned in the Luxembourg with me, was taken to the tribunal and the guillotine, and I, his principal, was left.

There were two foreigners in the Convention, Anacharsis Clootz and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. Joel Barlow was with us when we went to prison.

Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my *suppléant*, as member of the Convention for the department of the Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison and took my place there, and he was sent to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all the way through.

One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night, and a hundred and sixty of them guillotined next day, of which I now

know I was to have been one; and the manner I escaped that fate is curious, and has all the appearance of accident.

The room in which I was lodged was on the ground floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward and flat against the wall; so that when it was open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuele, of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael Rubyns, and Charles Bastini of Louvain.

When persons by scores and by hundreds were to be taken out of the prison for the guillotine it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal, by which they knew what rooms to go to, and what number to take. We, as I have stated, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk; but it happened, if happening is a proper word, that the mark was put on when the door was open, and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night, and the destroying angel passed by it. A few days after this, Robespierre fell, and Mr. Monroe arrived and reclaimed me, and invited me to his house.

During the whole of my imprisonment, prior to the fall of Robespierre, there was no time when I could think my life worth twenty-four hours, and my mind was made up to meet its fate. The Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to reclaim me, but without success. There was no party among them with respect to me.

My only hope then rested on the Government of America, that it would *remember me.* But the icy heart of ingratitude, in whatever man it be placed, has neither feeling nor sense of honor. The letter of Mr. Jefferson has served to wipe away the reproach, and done justice to the mass of the people of America.

When a party was forming, in the latter end of 1777, and beginning of 1778, of which John Adams was one, to remove Mr. Washington from the command of the army on the complaint that *he did nothing*, I wrote the fifth number of the "Crisis," and published it at Lancaster (Congress then being at York Town, in Pennsylvania), to ward off that meditated blow; for though I well knew that the black times of '76 were the natural consequence of his want of military judgment in the choice of positions into which the army was put about New York and New Jersey, I could see no possible advantage, and nothing but mischief, that could arise by distracting the

army into parties, which would have been the case had the intended motion gone on.

General [Charles] Lee, who with a sarcastic genius joined [to] a great fund of military knowledge, was perfectly right when he said "*We have no business on islands, and in the bottom of bogs, where the enemy, by the aid of its ships, can bring its whole force against a part of ours and shut it up.*" This had like to have been the case at New York, and it was the case at Fort Washington, and would have been the case at Fort Lee if General [Nathanael] Greene had not moved instantly off on the first news of the enemy's approach. I was with Greene through the whole of that affair and know it perfectly.

But though I came forward in defense of Mr. Washington when he was attacked, and made the best that could be made of a series of blunders that had nearly ruined the country, he left me to perish when I was in prison. But as I told him of it in his life-time, I should not now bring it up if the ignorant impertinence of some of the Federal papers, who are pushing Mr. Washington forward as their stalking horse, did not make it necessary.

That gentleman did not perform his part in the Revolution better, nor with more honor, than I did mine, and the one part was as necessary as the other.

He accepted as a present (though he was already rich), a hundred thousand acres of land in America, and left me to occupy six foot of earth in France.

I wish, for his own reputation, he had acted with more justice. But it was always known of Mr. Washington, by those who best knew him, that he was of such an icy and death-like constitution that he neither loved his friends nor hated his enemies. But, be this as it may, I see no reason that a difference between Mr. Washington and me should be made a theme of discord with other people. There are those who may see merit in both without making themselves partisans of either, and with this reflection I close the subject.

As to the hypocritical abuse thrown out by the Federalists on other subjects, I recommend to them the observance of a commandment that existed before either Christian or Jew existed:

> Thou shalt make a covenant with thy senses:
> With thine eye, that it behold no evil,
> With thine ear, that it hear no evil,
> With thy tongue, that it speak no evil,
> With thy hands, that they commit no evil.

If the Federalists will follow this commandment, they will leave off lying.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel, November 26, 1802.

LETTER IV

THIS letter, like the three preceding ones addressed to "The National Intelligencer," in which it appeared December 6, 1802, was written while Paine was still a guest at Lovett's Hotel, Washington City. In it the author reiterates his disapproval of the Federalist doctrine enunciated in the Federalist papers written by Hamilton, Madison and Jay. The origin of Paine's quarrel with the Federalists was their conservative belief in popular government and their hostility to the French Revolution.

Paine's American property, to which he alludes as enhancing in value, consisted principally of a house at Bordentown, New Jersey, and a farming estate of 277 acres on the present site of New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York, given him in 1784 by the State of New York, in recognition of his patriotic services. In addition Congress had granted Paine $3,800, and the State of Pennsylvania gave him £500.

AS Congress is on the point of meeting, the public papers will necessarily be occupied with the debates of the ensuing session, and as, in consequence of my long absence from America, my private affairs require my attendance (for it is necessary I do this, or I could not preserve, as I do, my independence), I shall close my address to the public with this letter.

I congratulate them on the success of the late elections, and *that* with the additional confidence, that while honest men are chosen and wise measures pursued, neither the treason of apostasy, masked under the name of Federalism, of which I have spoken in my second letter, nor

the intrigues of foreign emissaries, acting in concert with that mask, can prevail.

As to the licentiousness of the papers calling themselves *Federal,* a name that apostasy has taken, it can hurt nobody but the party or the persons who support such papers. There is naturally a wholesome pride in the public mind that revolts at open vulgarity. It feels itself dishonored even by hearing it, as a chaste woman feels dishonor by hearing obscenity she cannot avoid. It can smile at wit, or be diverted with strokes of satirical humor, but it detests the *blackguard.*

The same sense of propriety that governs in private companies, governs in public life. If a man in company runs his wit upon another, it may draw a smile from some persons present, but as soon as he turns a blackguard in his language the company gives him up; and it is the same in public life.

The event of the late election shows this to be true; for in proportion as those papers have become more and more vulgar and abusive, the elections have gone more and more against the party they support, or that supports them. Their predecessor, *Porcupine* [Cobbett] had wit—these scribblers have none. But as soon as his *blackguardism* (for it is the proper name of it) outran his wit, he was abandoned by everybody but the English minister who protected him.

The Spanish proverb says, "*there never was a cover large enough to hide itself*"; and the proverb applies to the case of those papers and the shattered remnant of the faction that supports them. The falsehoods they fabricate, and the abuse they circulate, is a cover to hide something from being seen, but it is not large enough to hide itself. It is as a tub thrown out to the whale to prevent its attacking and sinking the vessel. They want to draw the attention of the public from thinking about, or inquiring into, the measures of the late Administration, and the reason why so much public money was raised and expended; and so far as a lie to-day, and a new one to-morrow, will answer this purpose, it answers theirs. It is nothing to them whether they be believed or not, for if the negative purpose be answered the main point is answered, to them.

He that picks your pocket always tries to make you look another way. "Look," says he, "at yon man t'other side the street—what a nose he has got? —Lord, yonder is a chimney on fire!—Do you see yon man going along in the salamander great coat? That is the very man that stole one of Jupiter's satellites, and sold it to a countryman for a gold watch, and it set his breeches on fire!"

Now the man that has his hand in your pocket, does not care a farthing whether you believe what

he says or not. All his aim is to prevent your looking at *him;* and this is the case with the remnant of the Federal faction. The leaders of it have imposed upon the country, and they want to turn the attention of it from the subject.

In taking up any public matter, I have never made it a consideration, and never will, whether it be popular or unpopular; but whether it be *right* or *wrong*. The right will always become the popular, if it has courage to show itself, and the shortest way is always a straight line.

I despise expedients, they are the gutter-hole of politics, and the sink where reputation dies. In the present case, as in every other, I cannot be accused of using any; and I have no doubt but thousands will hereafter be ready to say, as Gouverneur Morris said to me, after having abused me pretty handsomely in Congress for the opposition I gave the fraudulent demand of Silas Deane of two thousand pounds sterling: *"Well, we were all duped, and I among the rest!"*

Were the late Administration to be called upon to give reasons for the expense it put the country to, it can give none. The danger of an invasion was a bubble that served as a cover to raise taxes and armies to be employed on some other purpose. But if the

people of America believed it true, the cheerfulness with which they supported these measures and paid those taxes is an evidence of their patriotism; and if they supposed me their enemy, though in that supposition they did me injustice, it was not injustice in them. He that acts as he believes, though he may act wrong, is not conscious of wrong.

But though there was no danger, no thanks are due to the late Administration for it. They sought to blow up a flame between the two countries; and so intent were they upon this, that they went out of their way to accomplish it. In a letter which the Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering, wrote to Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul at Paris, he broke off from the official subject of his letter, to *thank God* in very exulting language, *that the Russians had cut the French Army to pieces*. Mr. Skipwith, after showing me the letter, very prudently concealed it.

It was the injudicious and wicked acrimony of this letter, and some other like conduct of the then Secretary of State, that occasioned me, in a letter to a friend in the Government, to say, that if there was any official business to be done in France, till a regular Minister could be appointed, it could not be trusted to a more proper person than Mr. Skipwith. "*He is,*" said I, "*an honest man, and will do business,*

and that with good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with. A faculty which that BEAR, *Timothy Pickering, wanted, and which the* BEAR *of that* BEAR, *John Adams, never possessed.*"

In another letter to the same friend, in 1797, and which was put unsealed under cover to Colonel Burr, I expressed a satisfaction that Mr. Jefferson, since he was not President, had accepted the Vice-presidency; "*for*," said I, "*John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him.*" He has now sufficiently proved, that though I have not the spirit of prophecy, I have the gift of *judging right.*

And all the world knows, for it cannot help knowing, that to judge *rightly* and to write *clearly*, and that upon all sorts of subjects, to be able to command thought and as it were to play with it at pleasure, and be always master of one's temper in writing, is the faculty only of a serene mind, and the attribute of a happy and philosophical temperament.

The scribblers, who know me not, and who fill their papers with paragraphs about me, besides their want of talents, drink too many slings and drams in a morning to have any chance with me. But, poor fellows, they must do something for the little pittance

they get from their employers. This is my apology for them.

My anxiety to get back to America was great for many years. It is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American Revolution that made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had no wish for public life, nor has it now.

By the accounts I received, she appeared to me to be going wrong, and that some meditated treason against her liberties lurked at the bottom of her government. I heard that my friends were oppressed, and I longed to take my stand among them, and if other times to *try men's souls* were to arrive, that I might bear my share. But my efforts to return were ineffectual.

As soon as Mr. Monroe had made a good standing with the French Government, for the conduct of his predecessor [Morris] had made his reception as Minister difficult, he wanted to send despatches to his own Government by a person to whom he could confide a verbal communication, and he fixed his choice on me. He then applied to the Committee of Public Safety for a passport; but as I had been voted again into the Convention, it was only the Convention that could give the passport; and as an application

to them for that purpose would have made my going publicly known, I was obliged to sustain the disappointment, and Mr. Monroe to lose the opportunity.

When that gentleman left France to return to America I was to have gone with him. It was fortunate I did not. The vessel he sailed in was visited by a British frigate, that searched every part of it, and down to the hold, for Thomas Paine. I then went, the same year, to embark at Havre. But several British frigates were cruising in sight of the port who knew I was there, and I had to return again to Paris.

Seeing myself thus cut off from every opportunity that was in my power to command, I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, that, if the fate of the election should put him in the chair of the Presidency, and he should have occasion to send a frigate to France, he would give me the opportunity of returning by it, which he did. But I declined coming by the *Maryland*, the vessel that was offered me, and waited for the frigate that was to bring the new Minister, Mr. Chancellor Livingstone, to France.

But that frigate was ordered round to the Mediterranean; and as at that time the war was over, and the British cruisers called in, I could come any way. I then agreed to come with Commodore Barney in a

vessel he had engaged. It was again fortunate I did not, for the vessel sank at sea, and the people were preserved in the boat.

Had half the number of evils befallen me that the number of dangers amount to through which I have been preserved, there are those who would ascribe it to the wrath of heaven; why then do they not ascribe my preservation to the protecting favor of heaven?

Even in my worldly concerns, I have been blessed. The little property I left in America, and which I cared nothing about, not even to receive the rent of it, has been increasing in the value of its capital more than eight hundred dollars every year, for the fourteen years and more that I have been absent from it. I am now in my circumstances independent; and my economy makes me rich. As to my health, it is perfectly good, and I leave the world to judge of the stature of my mind. I am in every instance a living contradiction to the mortified Federalists.

In my publications, I follow the rule I began with in "Common Sense," that is, to consult nobody, nor to let anybody see what I write till it appears publicly. Were I to do otherwise the case would be that between the timidity of some, who are so afraid of doing wrong that they never do right, the puny judg-

ment of others, and the despicable craft of preferring *expedient to right*, as if the world was a world of babies in leading strings, I should get forward with nothing.

My path is a right line, as straight and clear to me as a ray of light. The boldness (if they will have it to be so) with which I speak on any subject is a compliment to the judgment of the reader. It is like saying to him, *I treat you as a man and not as a child.* With respect to any worldly object, as it is impossible to discover any in me, therefore what I do, and my manner of doing it, ought to be ascribed to a good motive.

In a great affair, where the happiness of man is at stake, I love to work for nothing; and so fully am I under the influence of this principle, that I should lose the spirit, the pleasure, and the pride of it, were I conscious that I looked for reward; and with this declaration, I take my leave for the present.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,
December 3, 1802.

LETTER V

THIS letter, which appeared in "The National Intelligencer" of February 2, 1803, is interesting as an attempt on the part of Paine to exonerate Aaron Burr of the charges made against him in the Presidential campaign of 1800. The votes in the electoral college being equally divided between Burr and Jefferson, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives. Jefferson was chosen President on the thirty-sixth ballot, but he never forgave Burr for the tactics of his supporters. Being an old friend of both Burr and Jefferson, Paine must have felt some embarrassment in writing this letter.

The Senator Ogden, whose relative is quoted as exculpating Burr, was sent to the United States Senate by the Federalist Legislature of New Jersey in 1801, and in 1812 was elected Governor of that State.

The Congressional investigation which Paine implores was never made. The last paragraph of this communication shows the great desire Paine had for a reconciliation between Jefferson and Burr—a desire which was never fulfilled.

IT is always the interest of a far greater part of the nation to have a thing right than to have it wrong; and therefore, in a country whose government is founded on the system of election and representation, the fate of every party is decided by its principles.

As this system is the only form and principle of government by which liberty can be preserved, and the only one that can embrace all the varieties of a great extent of country, it necessarily follows that to have the representation real, the election must be real; and that where the election is a fiction, the representation is a fiction also. *Like will always produce like.*

A great deal has been said and written concerning the conduct of Mr. Burr, during the late contest, in the Federal Legislature, whether Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Burr should be declared President of the United States. Mr. Burr has been accused of intriguing to obtain the Presidency. Whether this charge be substantiated or not makes little or no part of the purport of this letter.

There is a point of much higher importance to attend to than anything that relates to the individual Mr. Burr: for the great point is not whether Mr. Burr has intrigued, but whether the Legislature has intrigued with *him*.

Mr. Ogden, a relation of one of the Senators of New Jersey of the same name, and of the party assuming the style of Federalists, has written a letter published in the New York papers, signed with his name, the purport of which is to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charges brought against him. In this letter he says:

"When about to return from Washington, two or three *Members of Congress* of the Federal party spoke to me of *their views* as to the election of a President, desiring me to converse with Colonel Burr on the subject, and to ascertain *whether he would enter into terms*. On my return to New York I called on Colonel

Burr, and communicated the above to him. He explicitly declined the explanation, and did neither propose nor agree to any terms."

How nearly is human cunning allied to folly! The animals to whom nature has given the faculty we call *cunning*, know always when to use it, and use it wisely; but when man descends to cunning, he blunders and betrays.

Mr. Ogden's letter is intended to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charge of intriguing to obtain the Presidency; and the letter that he (Ogden) writes for this purpose is direct evidence against his party in Congress that they intrigued with Burr to obtain him for President, and employed him (Ogden) for the purpose. To save *Aaron*, he betrays *Moses*, and then turns informer against the *Golden Calf*.

It is but of little importance to the world to know if Mr. Burr *listened* to an intriguing proposal, but it is of great importance to the constituents to know if their representatives in Congress made one. The ear can commit no crime, but the tongue may; and therefore the right policy is to drop Mr. Burr, as being only the hearer, and direct the whole charge against the Federal faction in Congress as the active original culprit, or, if the priests will have Scripture for it, as the serpent that beguiled Eve.

The plot of the intrigue was to make Mr. Burr President, on the private condition of his agreeing to, and entering into, terms with them, that is, with the proposers. Had then the election been made, the country, knowing nothing of this private and illegal transaction, would have supposed, for who could have supposed otherwise, that it had a President according to the forms, principles and intention of the Constitution.

No such thing. Every form, principle and intention of the Constitution would have been violated; and instead of a President, it would have had a mute, a sort of image, hand-bound and tongue-tied, the dupe and slave of a party, placed on the theater of the United States and acting the farce of President.

It is of little importance, in a constitutional sense, to know what the terms to be proposed might be, because any terms other than those which the Constitution prescribes to a President are criminal. Neither do I see how Mr. Burr, or any other person put in the same condition, could have taken the oath prescribed by the Constitution to a President, which is, "*I do solemnly swear* (or affirm) *that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.*"

How, I ask, could such a person have taken such an oath, knowing at the same time that he had entered into the Presidency on terms unknown in the Constitution, and private, and which would deprive him of the freedom and power of acting as President of the United States, agreeably to his constitutional oath?

Mr. Burr, by not agreeing to terms, has escaped the danger to which they exposed him, and the perjury that would have followed, and also the punishment annexed thereto. Had he accepted the Presidency on terms unknown in the Constitution, and private, and had the transaction afterwards transpired (which it most probably would, for roguery is a thing difficult to conceal), it would have produced a sensation in the country too violent to be quieted, and too just to be resisted; and in any case the election must have been void.

But what are we to think of those Members of Congress, who, having taken an oath of the same constitutional import as the oath of the President, violate that oath by tampering to obtain a President on private conditions? If this is not sedition against the Constitution and the country, it is difficult to define what sedition in a representative can be.

Say not that this statement of the case is the effect of personal or party resentment. No. It is the effect of *sincere concern* that such corruption, of which this is but a sample, should, in the space of a few years, have crept into a country that had the fairest opportunity that Providence ever gave, within the knowledge of history, of making itself an illustrious example to the world.

What the terms were, or were to be, it is probable we never shall know; or what is more probable that feigned ones, if any, will be given. But from the conduct of the party since that time we may conclude that no taxes would have been taken off, that the clamor for war would have been kept up, new expenses incurred, and taxes and offices increased in consequence; and, among the articles of a private nature, that the leaders in this seditious traffic were to stipulate with the mock President for lucrative appointments for themselves.

But if these plotters against the Constitution understood their business, and they had been plotting long enough to be masters of it, a single article would have comprehended everything, which is, *That the President (thus made) should be governed in all cases whatsoever by a private junto appointed by themselves.* They could then, through the medium of a

mock President, have negatived all bills which their party in Congress could not have opposed with success, and reduced representation to a nullity.

The country has been imposed upon, and the real culprits are but few; and as it is necessary for the peace, harmony and honor of the Union to separate the deceiver from the deceived, the betrayer from the betrayed, that men who once were friends in the worst of times should be friends again, it is necessary, as a beginning, that this dark business be brought to full investigation. Ogden's letter is direct evidence of the fact of tampering to obtain a conditional President. He knows the two or three Members of Congress that commissioned him, and they know who commissioned them.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,
January 29, 1803.

LETTER VI

THIS letter was written at Bordentown, New Jersey, whence Paine had gone from Washington in February, 1803, and appeared in the "Aurora," a Philadelphia publication. En route to his old New Jersey home, Paine was accosted in Baltimore by a Swedenborgian minister with the information that the key to the Scriptures had been found, after being lost 4,000 years. "Then it must be very rusty," Paine rejoined.

He takes the Federal leaders, particularly Gouverneur Morris, then in the United States Senate, to task for trying to force a war with France, at a time when President Jefferson was negotiating the peaceful purchase of Louisiana.

The reference to the Barbary Powers concerns the little war with Tripoli, in which the American navy put an end to the tribute-paying which had been imposed on Mediterranean commerce by the Algerine pirates.

Paine shows his bias in saying that "Hamilton hated and despised both Adams and Washington." Hamilton's pamphlet against Adams appeared in 1800, but his early breach with Washington had certainly closed.

RELIGION and War is the cry of the Federalists; Morality and Peace the voice of Republicans. The union of morality and peace is congenial; but that of religion and war is a paradox, and the solution of it is hypocrisy.

The leaders of the Federalists have no judgment; their plans no consistency of parts; and want of consistency is the natural consequence of want of principle.

They exhibit to the world the curious spectacle of an *Opposition* without a *cause*, and conduct without system. Were they, as doctors, to prescribe medicine as they practise politics, they would poison their patients with destructive compounds.

There are not two things more opposed to each other than war and religion; and yet, in the double game those leaders have to play, the one is necessarily the theme of their politics, and the other the text of their sermons. The week-day orator of Mars, and the Sunday preacher of Federal grace, play like gamblers into each other's hands, and this they call religion.

Though hypocrisy can counterfeit every virtue, and become the associate of every vice, it requires a great dexterity of craft to give it the power of deceiving. A painted sun may glisten, but it cannot warm. For hypocrisy to personate virtue successfully it must know and feel what virtue is, and as it cannot long do this it cannot long deceive. When an orator foaming for war breathes forth in another sentence a *plaintive piety of words*, he may as well write HYPOCRISY on his front.

The late attempt of the Federal leaders in Congress (for they acted without the knowledge of their constituents) to plunge the country into war merits not only reproach but indignation. It was madness, conceived in ignorance and acted in wickedness. The head and the heart went partners in the crime.

A neglect of punctuality in the performance of a treaty is made a *cause* of war by the *Barbary Powers*,

and of remonstrance and explanation by *civilized Powers*. The Mahometans of Barbary negotiate by the sword—they seize first, and expostulate afterwards; and the Federal leaders have been laboring to *barbarize* the United States by adopting the practise of the Barbary States, and this they call honor. Let their honor and their hypocrisy go weep together, for both are defeated. Their present Administration is too moral for hypocrites, and too economical for public spendthrifts.

A man the least acquainted with diplomatic affairs must know that a neglect in punctuality is not one of the legal causes of war, unless that neglect be confirmed by a refusal to perform; and even then it depends upon circumstances connected with it. The world would be in continual quarrels and war, and commerce be annihilated, if Algerine policy was the law of nations.

And were America, instead of becoming an example to the Old World of good and moral government and civil manners, or, if they like it better, of gentlemanly conduct toward other nations, to set up the character of ruffian, that of *word and blow, and the blow first*, and thereby give the example of pulling down the little that civilization has gained upon barbarism, her independence, instead of being an honor

and a blessing, would become a curse upon the world and upon herself.

The conduct of the Barbary Powers, though unjust in principle, is suited to their prejudices, situation and circumstances. The crusades of the Church to exterminate them fixed in their minds the unobliterated belief that every Christian power was their mortal enemy.

Their religious prejudices, therefore, suggest the policy, which their situation and circumstances protect them in. As a people, they are neither commercial nor agricultural, they neither import nor export, have no property floating on the seas, nor ships and cargoes in the ports of foreign nations. No retaliation, therefore, can be acted upon them, and they sin secure from punishment.

But this is not the case with the United States. If she sins as a Barbary Power, she must answer for it as a civilized one. Her commerce is continually passing on the seas, exposed to capture, and her ships and cargoes in foreign ports to detention and reprisal. An act of war committed by her in the Mississippi would produce a war against the commerce of the Atlantic States, and the latter would have to curse the policy that provoked the former.

In every point, therefore, in which the character and interest of the United States be considered, it would ill become her to set an example contrary to the policy and custom of civilized powers, and practised only by the Barbary Powers, that of striking before she expostulates.

But can any man, calling himself a legislator, and supposed by his constituents to know something of his duty, be so ignorant as to imagine that seizing on New Orleans would finish the affair or even contribute toward it? On the contrary it would have made it worse.

The treaty right of deposit at New Orleans and the right of the navigation of the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico are distant things. New Orleans is more than a hundred miles in the country from the mouth of the river, and, as a place of deposit, is of no value if the mouth of the river be shut, which either France or Spain could do, and which our possession of New Orleans could neither prevent nor remove.

New Orleans in our possession, by an act of hostility, would have become a blockaded port, and consequently of no value to the Western people as a place of deposit. Since, therefore, an interruption had arisen to the commerce of the Western States, and until the matter could be brought to a fair explana-

tion, it was of less injury to have the port shut and the river open than to have the river shut and the port in our possession.

That New Orleans could be taken required no stretch of policy to plan, nor spirit of enterprise to effect. It was like marching behind a man to knock him down: and the dastardly slyness of such an attack would have stained the fame of the United States. Where there is no danger cowards are bold, and Captain Bobadils are to be found in the Senate as well as on the stage. Even *Gouverneur*, on such a march, dare have shown a leg.

The people of the Western country to whom the Mississippi serves as an inland sea to their commerce must be supposed to understand the circumstances of that commerce better than a man who is a stranger to it; and as they have shown no approbation of the war-whoop measures of the Federal senators it becomes presumptive evidence they disapprove them.

This is a new mortification for those war-whoop politicians; for the case is, that finding themselves losing ground and withering away in the Atlantic States, they laid hold of the affair of New Orleans in the vain hope of rooting and reinforcing themselves in the Western States; and they did this without perceiving that it was one of those ill-judged hypocritical ex-

pedients in politics, that whether it succeeded or failed the event would be the same.

Had their motion [that of Ross and Morris] succeeded, it would have endangered the commerce of the Atlantic States and ruined their reputation there; and on the other hand the attempt to make a tool of the Western people was so badly concealed as to extinguish all credit with them.

But hypocrisy is a vice of sanguine constitution. It flatters and promises itself everything; and it has yet to learn, with respect to moral and political reputation, it is less dangerous to offend than to deceive.

To the measures of Administration, supported by the firmness and integrity of the majority in Congress, the United States owe, as far as human means are concerned, the preservation of peace, and of national honor. The confidence which the Western people reposed in the Government and their representatives is rewarded with success. They are reinstated in their rights with the least possible loss of time; and their harmony with the people of New Orleans, so necessary to the prosperity of the United States, which would have been broken, and the seeds of discord sown in its place, had hostilities been preferred to accommodation, remains unimpaired. Have the Federal ministers of the Church meditated on these matters? and

laying aside, as they ought to do, their electioneering and vindictive prayers and sermons, returned thanks that peace is preserved, and commerce, without the stain of blood?

In the pleasing contemplation of this state of things the mind, by comparison, carries itself back to those days of uproar and extravagance that marked the career of the former Administration, and decides, by the unstudied impulse of its own feelings, that something must then have been wrong. Why was it that America, formed for happiness, and remote by situation and circumstances from the troubles and tumults of the European world, became plunged into its vortex and contaminated with its crimes?

The answer is easy. Those who were then at the head of affairs were apostates from the principles of the Revolution. Raised to an elevation they had not a right to expect, nor judgment to conduct, they became like feathers in the air, and blown about by every puff of passion or conceit.

Candor would find some apology for their conduct if want of judgment was their only defect. But error and crime, though often alike in their features, are distant in their characters and in their origin. The one has its source in the weakness of the head, the

other in the hardness of the heart, and the coalition of the two describes the former Administration.

Had no injurious consequences arisen from the conduct of that Administration, it might have passed for error or imbecility, and been permitted to die and be forgotten. The grave is kind to innocent offense. But even innocence, when it is a cause of injury, ought to undergo an inquiry.

The country, during the time of the former Administration, was kept in continual agitation and alarm; and that no investigation might be made into its conduct, it intrenched itself within a magic circle of terror, and called it a SEDITION LAW. Violent and mysterious in its measures and arrogant in its manners, it affected to disdain information, and insulted the principles that raised it from obscurity.

John Adams and Timothy Pickering were men whom nothing but the accidents of the times rendered visible on the political horizon. Elevation turned their heads, and public indignation has cast them to the ground. But an inquiry into the conduct and measures of that Administration is nevertheless necessary.

The country was put to great expense. Loans, taxes and standing armies became the standing order of the day. The militia, said Secretary Pickering, are

not to be depended upon, and fifty thousand men must be raised. For what? No cause to justify such measures has yet appeared. No discovery of such a cause has yet been made. The pretended Sedition Law shut up the sources of investigation, and the precipitate flight of John Adams closed the scene. But the matter ought not to sleep here.

It is not to gratify resentment, or encourage it in others, that I enter upon this subject. It is not in the power of man to accuse me of a persecuting spirit. But some explanation ought to be had. The motives and objects respecting the extraordinary and expensive measures of the former Administration ought to be known. The Sedition Law, that shield of the moment, prevented it then, and justice demands it now.

If the public have been imposed upon, it is proper they should know it; for where judgment is to act, or a choice is to be made, knowledge is first necessary. The conciliation of parties, if it does not grow out of explanation, partakes of the character of collusion or indifference.

There has been guilt somewhere; and it is better to fix it where it belongs, and separate the deceiver from the deceived, than that suspicion, the bane of society, should range at large, and sour the public

mind. The military measures that were proposed and carried on during the former Administration could not have for their object the defense of the country against invasion. This is a case that decides itself; for it is self-evident, that while the war raged in Europe, neither France nor England could spare a man to send to America.

The object, therefore, must be something at home, and that something was the overthrow of the representative system of government, for it could be nothing else. But the plotters got into confusion and became enemies to each other. Adams hated and was jealous of Hamilton, and Hamilton hated and despised both Adams and Washington.[1] Surly Timothy stood aloof, as he did at the affair of Lexington, and the part that fell to the public was to pay the expense.

But ought a people who, but a few years ago, were fighting the battles of the world for liberty had no home but here, ought such a people to stand quietly by and see that liberty undermined by apostasy and overthrown by intrigue? Let the tombs of the slain recall their recollection, and the forethought of what their children are to be revive and fix in their hearts the love of liberty.

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[1] A very questionable statement.—*Editor.*

If the former Administration can justify its conduct, give it the opportunity. The manner in which John Adams disappeared from the Government renders an inquiry the more necessary. He gave some account of himself, lame and confused as it was, to certain *Eastern wise men* who came to pay homage to him on his birthday. But if he thought it necessary to do this, ought he not to have rendered an account to the public? They had a right to expect it of him.

In that *tête-à-tête* account, he says, "Some measures were the effect of imperious necessity, much against my inclination." What measures does Mr. Adams mean, and what is the imperious necessity to which he alludes? "Others (says he) were measures of the Legislature, which, although approved when passed, were never previously proposed or recommended by me." What measures, it may be asked, were those, for the public have a right to know the conduct of their representatives? "Some (says he) left to my discretion were never executed, because no necessity for them, in my judgment, ever occurred."

What does this dark apology, mixed with accusation, amount to, but to increase and confirm the suspicion that something was wrong? Administration only was possessed of foreign official information, and it was only upon that information communicated by

him publicly or privately, or to Congress, that Congress could act; and it is not in the power of Mr. Adams to show, from the condition of the belligerent powers, that any imperious necessity called for the warlike and expensive measures of his Administration.

What the correspondence between the Administration and Rufus King in London, or Quincy Adams in Holland, or Berlin, might be, is but little known. The public papers have told us that the former became cup-bearer from the London underwriters to Captain Truxtun, for which, as Minister from a neutral nation, he ought to have been censured. It is, however, a feature that marks the politics of the Minister, and hints at the character of the correspondence.

I know that it is the opinion of several members of both Houses of Congress, that an inquiry with respect to the conduct of the late Administration ought to be gone into. The convulsed state into which the country has been thrown will be best settled by a full and fair exposition of the conduct of that Administration, and the causes and object of that conduct. To be deceived, or to remain deceived, can be the interest of no man who seeks the public good; and it is the deceiver only, or one interested in the deception, that can wish to preclude inquiry.

The suspicion against the late Administration is that it was plotting to overturn the representative system of government, and that it spread alarms of invasions that had no foundation as a pretense for raising and establishing a military force as the means of accomplishing that object.

The law, called the Sedition Law,[1] enacted, that if any person should write or publish, or cause to be written or published, any libel [without defining what a libel is] against the Government of the United States, or either House of Congress, or against the President, he should be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

But it is a much greater crime for a President to plot against a constitution and the liberties of the people, than for an individual to plot against a President; and consequently, John Adams is accountable to the public for his conduct, as the individuals under his Administration were to the Sedition Law.

The object, however, of an inquiry, in this case, is not to punish, but to satisfy; and to show, by example, to future Administrations, that an abuse of

[1] Passed July 14, 1798, and in force until March 3, 1801. Hamilton opposed the Alien and Sedition Laws, seeing in them a peril to the Federal party.—*Editor.*

power and trust, however disguised by appearances, or rendered plausible by pretense, is one time or other to be accounted for.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, on the Delaware,
New Jersey, March 12, 1803.

LETTER VII

THIS seventh and last of the "Letters to American Citizens" was printed in "The True American," Trenton, New Jersey, late in April, 1803, soon after Paine resumed his residence at Bordentown, on the Delaware.

Regarding the "Maritime Compact" incorporated in this letter, an interesting entry, dated April 20, 1787, was made by John Hall of Trenton, in his diary. Telling Hall of Dr. Franklin, whom he (Paine) had just visited in Philadelphia, Paine spoke of "the treaty he, the Doctor, made with the late King of Prussia by adding an article that, should war ever break out, commerce should be free. The Doctor said he showed it to Vergennes, who said it met his idea, and was such as he would make, even with England."

In his "Address to the People of France," 1797, Paine made suggestions on the same subject; and a year later he sent nine articles of his proposed "Pacte Maritime" to Talleyrand, French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

THE malignant mind, like the jaundiced eye, sees everything through a false medium of its own creating. The light of heaven appears stained with yellow to the distempered sight of the one, and the fairest actions have the form of crimes in the venomed imagination of the other.

For seven months, both before and after my return to America in October last, the apostate papers styling themselves "Federal" were filled with paragraphs and essays respecting a letter from Mr. Jefferson to me at Paris; and though none of them knew the contents of the letter, nor the occasion of writing it, malignity taught them to suppose it, and the lying tongue of injustice lent them its aid.

That the public may no longer be imposed upon by Federal apostasy, I will now publish the letter, and the occasion of its being written.

The treaty negotiated in England by John Jay, and ratified by the Washington Administration, had so disgracefully surrendered the right and freedom of the American flag, that all the commerce of the United States on the ocean became exposed to capture, and suffered in consequence of it. The duration of the treaty was limited to two years after the war; and consequently America could not, during that period, relieve herself of the chains which the treaty had fixed upon her. This being the case, the only relief that could come must arise out of something originating in Europe that would, in its consequences, extend to America. It had long been my opinion that commerce contained within itself the means of its own protection; but as the time for bringing forward any new system is not always happening, it is necessary to watch its approach and lay hold of it before it passes away.

As soon as the late Emperor Paul of Russia abandoned his coalition with England and became a neutral power, this crisis of time, and also of circumstances, was then arriving; and I employed it in

arranging a plan for the protection of the commerce of neutral nations during war that might, in its operation and consequences, relieve the commerce of America. The plan, with the pieces accompanying it, consisted of about forty pages. The Citizen Bonneville, with whom I lived in Paris, translated it into French; Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul, Joel Barlow and myself had the translation printed and distributed as a present to the foreign ministers of all the neutral nations then resident in Paris. This was in the summer of 1800.

It was entitled "Maritime Compact" (in French *Pacte Maritime*). The plan, exclusive of the pieces that accompanied it, consisted of the following preamble and articles:

Maritime Compact

Being an Unarmed Association *of Nations for the protection of the Rights and Commerce of Nations that shall be neutral in time of War.*

Whereas, the vexations and injuries to which the rights and commerce of neutral nations have been, and continue to be, exposed during the time of maritime war, render it necessary to establish a law of

nations for the purpose of putting an end to such vexations and injuries, and to guarantee to the neutral nations the exercise of their just rights.

We, therefore, the undersigned Powers, form ourselves into an association, and establish the following as a law of nations on the seas.

ARTICLE THE FIRST

Definition of the Rights of Neutral Nations

The rights of nations, such as are exercised by them in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, are, and of right ought to be, the rights of neutral nations at all times; because,

First, those rights not having been abandoned by them, remain with them.

Secondly, because those rights cannot become forfeited or void, in consequence of war breaking out between two or more other nations.

A war of nation against nation being exclusively the act of the nations that make the war, and not the act of the neutral nations, cannot, whether considered in itself or in its consequences, destroy or diminish the rights of the nations remaining in peace.

ARTICLE THE SECOND

The ships and vessels of nations that rest neuter and at peace with the world during a war with other nations have a right to navigate freely on the seas as they navigated before that war broke out, and to proceed to and enter the port or ports of any of the belligerent powers, *with the consent of that Power,* without being seized, searched, visited, or any ways interrupted, by the nation or nations with which that nation is at war.

ARTICLE THE THIRD

For the conservation of the aforesaid rights, we, the undersigned Powers, engaging to each other our sacred faith and honor, DECLARE

That if any belligerent Power shall seize, search, visit, or any ways interrupt any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the Powers composing this Association, then each and all of the said undersigned Powers will cease to import, and will not permit to be imported into the ports or dominions of any of the said undersigned Powers, in any ship or vessel whatever, any goods, wares, or merchandise, produced or manufactured in, or exported

from, the dominions of the Power so offending against the Association hereby, established and proclaimed.

ARTICLE THE FOURTH

That all the ports appertaining to any and all of the Powers composing this Association shall be shut against the flag of the offending nation.

ARTICLE THE FIFTH

That no remittance or payment in money, merchandise, or bills of exchange, shall be made by any of the citizens, or subjects, of any of the Powers composing this Association, to the citizens or subjects of the offending nation, for the term of one year, or until reparation be made. The reparation to be —— times the amount of the damages sustained.

ARTICLE THE SIXTH

If any ship or vessel appertaining to any of the citizens or subjects of any of the Powers composing this Association shall be seized, searched, visited or interrupted by any belligerent nation, or be forcibly prevented entering the port of her destination, or be seized, searched, visited, or interrupted in coming out of such port, or be forcibly prevented from proceeding

to any new destination, or be insulted or visited by any agent from on board any vessel of any belligerent power, the government or executive power of the nation to which the ship or vessel so seized, searched, visited or interrupted belongs, shall, on evidence of the fact, make public proclamation of the same, and send a copy thereof to the government, or executive, of each of the Powers composing this Association, who shall publish the same in all the extent of his dominions, together with a declaration, that at the expiration of —— days after publication, the penal articles of this Association shall be put in execution against the offending nation.

ARTICLE THE SEVENTH

If reparation be not made within the space of one year, the said proclamation shall be renewed for one year more, and so on.

ARTICLE THE EIGHTH

The Association chooses for itself a flag to be carried at the mast-head conjointly with the national flag of each nation composing this Association.

The flag of the Association shall be composed of the same colors as compose the rain-bow, and arranged in the same order as they appear in that phenomenon.

ARTICLE THE NINTH

And whereas it may happen that one or more of the nations composing this Association may be, at the time of forming it, engaged in war or become so in future, in that case, the ships and vessels of such nation shall carry the flag of the Association bound round the mast to denote that the nation to which she belongs is a member of the Association and a respecter of its laws.

N.B. This distinction in the manner of carrying the flag is merely for the purpose that neutral vessels having the flag at the mast-head may be known at first sight.

ARTICLE THE TENTH

And whereas it is contrary to the moral principles of neutrality and peace that any neutral nation should furnish to the belligerent Powers, or any of them, the means of carrying on war against each other, We, therefore, the Powers composing this Association, declare that we will each one for itself prohibit in our dominions the exportation or transportation of military stores, comprehending gun-powder, cannon and cannon-balls, firearms of all kinds, and all kinds of

iron and steel weapons used in war. Excluding therefrom all kinds of utensils and instruments used in civil or domestic life, and every other article that cannot, in its immediate state, be employed in war.

Having thus declared the moral motives of the foregoing article, we declare also the civil and political intention thereof, to wit,

That as belligerent nations have no right to visit or search any ship or vessel belonging to a nation at peace and under the protection of the laws and government thereof, and as all such visit or search is an insult to the nation to which such ship or vessel belongs and to the government of the same, We, therefore, the Powers composing this Association, will take the right of prohibition on ourselves to whom it properly belongs, and by whom only it can be legally exercised, and not permit foreign nations, in a state of war, to usurp the right of legislating by proclamation for any of the citizens or subjects of the Powers composing this Association.

It is, therefore, in order to take away all pretense of search or visit, which by being offensive might become a new cause of war, that we will provide laws and publish them by proclamation, each in his own dominion, to prohibit the supplying or carrying to the belligerent Powers, or either of them, the military

stores or articles before mentioned, annexing thereto a penalty to be levied or inflicted upon any persons within our several dominions transgressing the same.

And we invite all persons, as well of the belligerent nations as of our own, or of any other, to give information of any knowledge they may have of any transgressions against the said law, that the offenders may be prosecuted.

By this conduct we restore the word contraband (*contra* and *ban*) to its true and original signification, which means against law, edict or proclamation; and none but the government of a nation can have, or can exercise, the right of making laws, edicts or proclamations, for the conduct of its citizens or subjects.

Now We, the undersigned Powers, declare the aforesaid articles to be a law of nations at all times, or until a congress of nations shall meet to form some law more effectual.

And we do recommend that, immediately on the breaking out of war between any two or more nations, deputies be appointed by all neutral nations, whether members of this Association or not, to meet in congress in some central place to take cognizance of any violations of the rights of neutral nations.

Signed, etc.

For the purpose of giving operation to the aforesaid plan of an *unarmed association,* the following paragraph was subjoined:

It may be judged proper for the order of business, that the Association of Nations have a president for a term of years, and the presidency to pass by rotation to each of the parties composing the Association.

In that case, and for the sake of regularity, the first president to be the executive power of the most northerly nation composing the Association, and his deputy or minister at the congress to be president of the congress—and the next most northerly to be vice-president, who shall succeed to the presidency, and so on. The line determining the geographical situation of each to be the latitude of the capital of each nation.

If this method be adopted it will be proper that the first president be nominally constituted in order to give rotation to the rest. In that case the following article might be added to the foregoing, viz. The constitution of the Association nominates the EMPEROR PAUL to be *first President* of the Association of Nations for the protection of neutral commerce and securing the freedom of the seas.

The foregoing plan, as I have before mentioned, was presented to the Ministers of all the neutral na-

tions then in Paris, in the summer of 1800. Six copies were given to the Russian General Springporten; and a Russian gentleman who was going to Petersburg took two expressly for the purpose of putting them into the hands of Paul. I sent the original manuscript, in my own handwriting, to Mr. Jefferson, and also wrote him four letters, dated the first, fourth, sixth, sixteenth of October, 1800, giving him an account of what was then going on in Europe respecting neutral commerce.

The case was that in order to compel the English Government to acknowledge the rights of neutral commerce, and that free ships make free goods, the *Emperor Paul,* in the month of September following the publication of the plan, shut all the ports of Russia against England. Sweden and Denmark did the same by their ports, and Denmark shut up Hamburg. Prussia shut up the Elbe and the Weser.

The ports of Spain, Portugal and Naples were shut up and, in general, all the ports of Italy except Venice, which the Emperor of Germany held; and had it not been for the untimely death of *Paul, a Law of Nations,* founded on the authority of nations, for establishing the rights of neutral commerce and the freedom of the seas, would have been proclaimed and the Government of England must have consented to that law, or

the nation must have lost its commerce; and the consequence to America would have been that such a law would, in a great measure if not entirely, have released her from the injuries of Jay's Treaty.

Of all these matters I informed Mr. Jefferson. This was before he was President, and the letter he wrote me after he was President was in answer to those I had written to him and the manuscript copy of the plan I had sent here. Here follows the letter:

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1801.

DEAR SIR:

Your letters of October first, fourth, sixth, sixteenth, came duly to hand, and the papers which they covered were, according to your permission, published in the newspapers, and in a pamphlet, and under your own name. These papers contain precisely our principles, and I hope they will be generally recognized here. *Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the Powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. They have so many other interests different from ours that we must avoid being entangled in them. We believe we can enforce those principles as to ourselves by peaceable means, now that we are likely to have our public councils detached from foreign views. The return of our citizens from the frenzy into which they had been wrought, partly by ill conduct in France, partly by artifices practised upon them, is al-*

most extinct, and will, I believe, become quite so. But these details, too minute and long for a letter, will be better developed by Mr. [John] Dawson, the bearer of this, a member of the late Congress, to whom I refer you for them. He goes in the *Maryland*, sloop of war, which will wait a few days at Havre to receive his letters to be written on his arrival at Paris. You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the *Maryland* to receive and accommodate you back if you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. Rob't R. Livingston is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France, but will not leave this, till we receive the ratification of the Convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors and to reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

This, citizens of the United States, is the letter about which the leaders and tools of the Federal faction, without knowing its contents or the occasion of writing it, have wasted so many malignant falsehoods.

It is a letter which on account of its wise economy and peaceable principles, and its forbearance to re-

proach, will be read by every good man and every good citizen with pleasure; and the faction mortified at its appearance will have to regret they forced it into publication. The least atonement they can now offer is to make the letter as public as they have made their own infamy, and learn to lie no more.

The same injustice they showed to Mr. Jefferson they showed to me. I had employed myself in Europe, and at my own expense, in forming and promoting a plan that would, in its operation, have benefited the commerce of America; and the faction here invented and circulated an account in the papers they employ that I had given a plan to the French for burning all the towns on the coast from Savannah to Baltimore.

Were I to prosecute them for this (and I do not promise that I will not, for the liberty of the press is not the liberty of lying) there is not a Federal judge, not even one of midnight appointment, but must, from the nature of the case, be obliged to condemn them. The faction, however, cannot complain they have been restrained in anything. They have had their full swing of lying uncontradicted; they have availed themselves, unopposed, of all the arts hypocrisy could devise; and the event has been, what in all such cases it ever will and ought to be, *the ruin of themselves.*

The characters of the late and of the present Administrations are now sufficiently marked, and the adherents of each keep up the distinction. The former Administration rendered itself notorious by outrage, coxcombical parade, false alarms, a continual increase of taxes and an unceasing clamor for war; and as every vice has a virtue opposed to it the present Administration moves on the direct contrary line.

The question, therefore, at elections is not properly a question upon persons, but upon principles. Those who are for peace, moderate taxes and mild government will vote for the Administration that conducts itself by those principles, in whatever hands that Administration may be.

There are in the United States, and particularly in the Middle States, several religious sects, whose leading moral principle is PEACE. It is, therefore, impossible that such persons, consistently with the dictates of that principle, can vote for an Administration that is clamorous for war. When moral principles, rather than persons, are candidates for power, to vote is to perform a moral duty, and not to vote is to neglect a duty.

That persons who are hunting after places, offices and contracts, should be advocates for war, taxes and extravagance, is not to be wondered at; but that so

large a portion of the people who had nothing to depend upon but their industry, and no other public prospect but that of paying taxes, and bearing the burden, should be advocates for the same measures, is a thoughtlessness not easily accounted for. But reason is recovering her empire, and the fog of delusion is clearing away.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, on the Delaware,
New Jersey, April 21, 1803.

TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA

JEFFERSON announced the purchase of Louisiana on October 17, 1803. The following summer Paine wrote this rebuking answer to a memorial sent to Congress by the French inhabitants of Louisiana. They demanded immediate admission to the Union, also the right to continue the importation of negro slaves. Paine reminds them of the "mischief caused in France by the possession of power before they understood principles." After explaining their position, and the freedom they had acquired without cost, he points out their ignorance of human "rights" as shown in their guilty notion that one of them is the power to enslave others.

This letter created a sensation. Addressing Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, on October 14, 1804, John Randolph of Roanoke wrote proposing "the printing of . . . thousand copies of Tom Paine's answer to their remonstrance, and transmitting them by as many thousand troops, who can speak a language perfectly intelligible to the people of Louisiana, whatever that of their government may be."

A PUBLICATION having the appearance of a memorial and remonstrance, to be presented to Congress at the ensuing session, has appeared in several papers. It is therefore open to examination, and I offer you my remarks upon it. The title and introductory paragraph are as follows:

"*To the Congress of the United States, in the Senate and House of Representatives convened:* We the subscribers, planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana, respectfully approach the Legislature of the United States with a memorial of *our rights*, a remonstrance against certain laws which contravene them, and a petition for

that redress to which the laws of nature, sanctioned by positive stipulations, have entitled us."

It often happens that when one party, or one that thinks itself a party, talks much about its rights, it puts those of the other party upon examining into their own, and such is the effect produced by your memorial.

A single reading of that memorial will show it is the work of some person who is not of your people. His acquaintance with the cause, commencement, progress and termination of the American Revolution decides this point; and his making *our* merits in that Revolution the ground of *your* claims, as if *our* merits could become *yours*, show he does not understand *your* situation.

We obtained our rights by calmly understanding principles, and by the successful event of a long, obstinate and expensive war. But it is not incumbent on us to fight the battles of the world for the world's profit.

You are already participating, without any merit or expense in obtaining it, the blessings of freedom acquired by ourselves; and in proportion as you become initiated into the principles and practise of the representative system of government, of which you

have yet had no experience, you will participate more and finally be partakers of the whole.

You see what mischief ensued in France by the possession of power before they understood principles. They earned liberty in words, but not in fact. The writer of this was in France through the whole of the Revolution, and knows the truth of what he speaks; for after endeavoring to give it principle, he had nearly fallen a victim to its rage.

There is a great want of judgment in the person who drew up your memorial. He has mistaken *your* case, and forgotten his *own;* and by trying to court your applause has injured your pretensions. He has written like a lawyer, straining every point that would please his client, without studying his advantage.

I find no fault with the composition of the memorial, for it is well written; nor with the principles of liberty it contains, considered in the abstract. The error lies in the misapplication of them, and in assuming a ground they have not a right to stand upon.

Instead of their serving you as a ground of reclamation against us, they change into a satire on yourselves. Why did you not speak thus when you ought to have spoken it? We fought for liberty when you stood quiet in slavery.

The author of the memorial, injudiciously confounding two distinct cases together, has spoken as if he was the memorialist of a body of Americans, who, after sharing equally with us in all the dangers and hardships of the Revolutionary War, had retired to a distance and made a settlement for themselves. If, in such a situation, Congress had established a temporary government over them, in which they were not personally consulted, they would have had a right to speak as the memorial speaks. But your situation is different from what the situation of such persons would be, and therefore *their* ground of reclamation cannot *of right* become yours.

You are arriving at freedom by the easiest means that any people ever enjoyed it; without contest, without expense, and even without any contrivance of your own. And you already so far mistake principles, that under the name of *rights* you ask for *powers; power* to *import and enslave Africans;* and *to govern* a territory that *we* have *purchased.*

To give color to your memorial, you refer to the treaty of cession (in which *you were not* one of the contracting parties), concluded at Paris between the Governments of the United States and France.

"The third article" you say "of the treaty lately concluded at Paris declares that the inhabitants of

the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States, and admitted *as soon as possible, according* to the *principles* of the Federal Constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States; and *in the meantime,* they shall be protected in the enjoyment of their liberty, property and the exercise of the religion they profess."

As from your former condition, you cannot be much acquainted with diplomatic policy, and I am convinced that even the gentleman who drew up the memorial is not, I will explain to you the grounds of this article. It may prevent your running into further errors.

The territory of Louisiana had been so often ceded to different European powers that it became a necessary article on the part of France, and for the security of Spain, the ally of France, and which accorded perfectly with our own principles and intentions, that it should be *ceded no more;* and this article, stipulating for the incorporation of Louisiana into the Union of the United States, stands as a bar against all future cession, and at the same time, as well as "*in the meantime,*" secures to you a civil and political permanency, personal security and liberty which you never enjoyed before.

France and Spain might suspect (and the suspicion would not have been ill-founded had the cession been treated for in the Administration of John Adams, or when Washington was President, and Alexander Hamilton President over him), that we *bought* Louisiana for the British Government, or with a view of selling it to her; and though such suspicion had no just ground to stand upon with respect to our present President, Thomas Jefferson, who is not only not a man of intrigue but who possesses that honest pride of principle that cannot be intrigued with, and which keeps intriguers at a distance, the article was nevertheless necessary as a precaution against future contingencies.

But you, from not knowing the political ground of the article, apply to yourselves *personally* and *exclusively* what had reference to the *territory*, to prevent its falling into the hands of any foreign power that might endanger the [establishment of] *Spanish* dominion in America, or those of the *French* in the West India islands.

You claim (you say) to be incorporated into the Union of the United States, and your remonstrances on this subject are unjust and without cause.

You are already *incorporated* into it as fully and effectually as the Americans themselves are, who are

settled in Louisiana. You enjoy the same rights, privileges, advantages and immunities which they enjoy; and when Louisiana, or some part of it, shall be erected into a constitutional state, you also will be citizens equal with them.

You speak in your memorial, as if *you* were the *only* people who were to live in Louisiana, and as if the territory was purchased that *you* exclusively might govern it. In both these cases you are greatly mistaken. The emigrations from the United States into the purchased territory, and the population arising therefrom, will, in a few years, exceed you in numbers. It is but twenty-six years since Kentucky began to be settled, and it already contains more than *double* your population.

In a candid view of the case you ask for what would be injurious to yourselves to receive, and unjust in us to grant. *Injurious*, because the settlement of Louisiana will go on much faster under the government and guardianship of Congress, than if the government of it were committed to *your* hands; and consequently, the landed property you possessed as individuals when the treaty was concluded, or have purchased since, will increase so much faster in value.

Unjust to ourselves, because as the reimbursements of the purchase money must come out of the sale of

the lands to new settlers, the government of it cannot suddenly go out of the hands of Congress. They are guardians of that property for *all the people of the United States.*

And besides this, as the new settlers will be chiefly from the United States, it would be unjust and ill policy to put them and their property under the jurisdiction of a people whose freedom they had contributed to purchase.

You ought also to recollect that the French Revolution has not exhibited to the world that grand display of principles and rights that would induce settlers from other countries to put themselves under a French jurisdiction in Louisiana. Beware of intriguers who may push you on from private motives of their own.

You complain of two cases, one of which you have *no right,* no concern with; and the other is founded in direct injustice.

You complain that Congress has passed a law to divide the country into two territories. It is not improper to inform you, that after the Revolutionary War ended, Congress divided the territory acquired by that war into ten territories; each of which was to be erected into a constitutional State, when it arrived at a certain population mentioned in the Act; and, in the meantime, an officer appointed by the President,

as the Governor of Louisiana now is, presided as Governor of the Western Territory over all such parts as have not arrived at the maturity of *statehood.*

Louisiana will require to be divided into twelve States or more; but this is a matter that belongs to the *purchaser* of the territory of Louisiana, and with which the inhabitants of the town of New Orleans have no right to interfere; and beside this, it is probable that the inhabitants of the other territory would choose to be independent of New Orleans. They might apprehend that on some speculating pretense their produce might be put in requisition, and a maximum price put on it—a thing not uncommon in a French Government.

As a general rule, without refining upon sentiment, one may put confidence in the justice of those who have no inducement to do us injustice; and this is the case Congress stands in with respect to both territories, and to all other divisions that may be laid out, and to all inhabitants and settlers, of whatever nation they may be.

There can be no such thing as what the memorial speaks of, that is *of a governor appointed by the President who may have no interest in the welfare of Louisiana.* He must, from the nature of the case, have more interest in it than any other person can

have. He is intrusted with the care of an extensive tract of country, now the property of the United States by purchase.

The value of those lands will depend on the increasing prosperity of Louisiana, its agriculture, commerce and population.

You have only a local and partial interest in the town of New Orleans, or its vicinity; and if, in consequence of exploring the country, new seats of commerce should offer, his general interest would lead him to open them, and your partial interest to shut them up.

There is probably some justice in your remark as it applies to the governments under which you *formerly* lived. Such governments always look with jealousy, and an apprehension of revolt, on colonies increasing in prosperity and population and they send governors to *keep them down.*

But when you argue from the conduct of governments *distant* and *despotic,* to that of *domestic* and *free* government, it shows you do not understand the principles and interest of a republic, and to put you right is friendship. We have had experience, and you have not.

The other case to which I alluded as being founded in direct injustice is that in which you petition for

power, under the name of *rights*, to import and enslave Africans!

Dare you put up a petition to heaven for such a power, without fearing to be struck from the earth by its justice?

Why, then, do you ask it of man against man?

Do you want to renew in Louisiana the horrors of Domingo?

COMMON SENSE.

September 22, 1804.

THE IRON BRIDGE

LETTER TO SIR GEORGE STAUNTON, BART.

THE recipient of this letter, dated Rotherham, Yorkshire, Spring of 1789, was an eminent English physician, diplomat and Orientalist, whose son, Sir George Thomas Staunton, introduced vaccination for smallpox into China. This is a companion letter to one Paine wrote earlier in the same year to Jefferson in Paris, describing his bridge-building enterprise.

At Rotherham, where the Messrs. Walker fitted up a workshop for Paine, he was visited by famous engineers and political personages, among them Sir George Staunton, Edmund Burke, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Fitzwilliam, Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society; and Charles James Fox. Incidentally, Lansdowne thought Paine might bridge the Atlantic and re-connect England and America! None of these distinguished Englishmen dreamt that within a year or so the admired bridge-builder was to throw his hammer aside and take up his pen to rend the fabric of hereditary government.

SIR:—As I know you interest yourself in the success of the useful arts, and are a member of the society for the promotion thereof, I do myself the pleasure to send you an account of a small experiment I have been making at Messrs. Walker's iron works at this place. You have already seen the model I constructed for a bridge of a single arch, to be made of iron, and erected over the river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia; but as the dimensions may have escaped your recollection, I will begin with stating those particulars.

The vast quantity of ice and melted snow at the breaking up of the frost in that part of America

render it impracticable to erect a bridge on piers. The river can conveniently be contracted to 400 feet, the model, therefore, is for an arch of 400 feet span; the height of the arch in the center, from the chord thereof, is to be about 20 feet, and to be brought off on the top so as to make the ascent about 1 foot in 18 or 20.

The judgment of the Academy of Sciences at Paris has been given on the principles and practicability of the construction. The original, signed by the Academy, is in my possession; and in which they fully approve and support the design. They introduce their opinion by saying:

It is certain that when such a project as that of making an iron arch of 400 feet span is thought of, and when we consider the effects resulting from an arch of such vast magnitude, it would be strange if doubts were not raised as to the success of such an enterprise, from the difficulties which at first present themselves. But if such be the disposition of the various parts, and the method of uniting them, that the collective body should present a whole both firm and solid, we should then no longer have the same doubts of the success of the plan.

The Academy then proceed to state the reasons on which their judgment is founded, and conclude with saying:

We conclude from what we have just remarked that Mr. Paine's plan of an iron bridge is ingeniously imagined,

that the construction of it is simple, solid and proper to give it the necessary strength for resisting the effects resulting from its burden, and that it is deserving of a trial. In short, it may furnish a new example of the application of a metal, which has not hitherto been used in any works on an extensive scale, although on many occasions it is employed with the greatest success.

As it was my design to pass some time in England before I returned to America, I employed part of it in making the small essay I am now to inform you of.

My intention, when I came to the iron works, was to raise an arch of at least 200 feet span; but as it was late in the fall of last year the season was too far advanced to work out of doors, and an arch of that extent too great to be worked within doors, and as I was unwilling to lose time, I moderated my ambition with a little "common sense," and began with such an arch as could be compassed within some of the buildings belonging to the works. As the construction of the American arch admits, in practise, any species of curve with equal facility, I set off in preference to all others a catenarian arch of 90 feet span and 5 feet high. Were this arch converted into an arch of a circle, the diameter of its circle would be 410 feet. From the ordinates of the arch taken from the wall where the arch was struck, I produced a similar arch on the floor whereon the work was to be fitted

and framed, and there was something so apparently just when the work was set out that the looking at it promised success.

You will recollect that the model is composed of four parallel arched ribs, and as the number of ribs may be increased at pleasure to any breadth an arch sufficient for a roadway may require, and the arches to any number the breadth of a river may require, the construction of one rib would determine for the whole; because if one rib succeeded, all the rest of the work, to any extent, is a repetition.

In less time than I expected, and before the winter set in, I had fitted and framed the arch, or properly the rib, completely together on the floor; it was then taken in pieces and stowed away during the winter, in a corner of a workshop, used in the meantime by the carpenters, where it occupied so small a compass as to be hid among the shavings; and though the extent of it is 90 feet, the depth of the arch at the center 2 feet 9 inches, and the depth at the branches 6 feet, the whole of it might, when in pieces, be put in an ordinary stage wagon, and sent to any part of England.

I returned to the works in April, and began to prepare for erecting; we chose a situation between a steel-furnace and a workshop, which served for but-

ments. The distance between those buildings was about 4 feet more than the span of the arch, which we filled up with chumps of wood at each end. I mention this as I shall have occasion to refer to it hereafter.

We soon ran up a center to turn the arch upon, and began our erections. Every part fitted to a mathematical exactness. The raising an arch of this construction is different to the method of raising a stone arch. In a stone arch they begin at the bottom, on the extremities of the arch, and work upward, meeting at the crown. In this we began at the crown by a line perpendicular thereto and worked downward each way. It differs likewise in another respect.

A stone arch is raised by sections of the curve, each stone being so, and this by concentric curves. The effect likewise of the arch upon the center is different, for as stone arches sometimes break down the center by their weight, this, on the contrary, grew lighter on the center as the arch increased in thickness, so much so that before the arch was completely finished it rose itself off the center the full thickness of the blade of a knife from one butment to the other, and is, I suppose, the first arch of ninety feet span that ever struck itself.

I have already mentioned that the spaces between the ends of the arches and the butments were filled

up with chumps of wood, and those rather in a damp state; and though we rammed them as close as we could we could not ram them so close as the drying, and the weight of the arch, or rib, especially when loaded, would be capable of doing; and we had now to observe the effects which the yielding and pressing up of the wood, and which corresponds to the giving away of the butments, so generally fatal to stone arches, would have upon this.

We loaded the rib with six tons of pig-iron, beginning at the center, and proceeding both ways, which is twice the weight of the iron in the rib, as I shall hereafter more particularly mention.

This had not the least visible effect on the strength of the arch, but it pressed the wood home, so as to gain in three or four days, together with the drying and the shrinking of the wood, above a quarter of an inch at each end, and consequently the chord or span of the arch was lengthened above half an inch. As this lengthening was more than double the feather of the keystone in a stone arch of these dimensions, such an alteration at the butment would have endangered the safety of the stone arch, while it produced on this no other than the proper mathematical effect. To evidence this I had recourse to the cord still swinging on the wall from which the curve of the arch was

taken. I set the chord to ninety feet span, and five feet for the height of the arch, and marked the curve on the wall.

I then removed the ends of the cords horizontally something more than a quarter of an inch at each end. The chord should then describe the exact catenarian curve which the rib had assumed by the same lengthening at the butments; that is, the rising of the chord should exactly correspond to the lowering of the arch, which it did through all their corresponding ordinates. The chord had risen something more than two inches at the center, diminishing to nothing each way, and the arch had descended the same quantity and in the same proportion.

I much doubt whether a stone arch, could it be constructed as flat as this, could sustain such an alteration; and, on the contrary, I see no reason to doubt but an arch on this construction and dimensions, or corresponding thereto, might be let down to half its height, or as far as it would descend, with safety. I say "as far as it would descend," because the construction renders it exceedingly probable that there is a point beyond which it would not descend, but retain itself independent of butments; but this cannot be explained but by a sight of the arch itself.

In four or five days, the arch having gained nearly all it could gain on the wood, except what the wood would lose by a summer's drying, the lowering of the arch began to be scarcely visible. The weight still continues on it, to which I intend to add more, and there is not the least visible effect on the perfect curvature or strength of the arch. The arch having thus gained nearly a solid bearing on the wood and the butments, and the days beginning to be warm, and the nights continuing to be cool, I had now to observe the effects of the contraction and expansion of the iron.

The Academy of Sciences at Paris, in their report on the principles and construction of this arch, state these effects as a matter of perfect indifference to the arch, or to the butments, and the experience establishes the truth of their opinion. It is probable the Academy may have taken, in part, the observations of M. Peronnet, architect to the King of France, and a member of the Academy, as some ground for that opinion.

From the observations of M. Peronnet, all arches, whether of stone or brick, are constantly ascending or descending by the changes of the weather, so as to render the difference perceptible by taking a level, and that all stone and brick buildings do the same.

In short, that matter is never stationary, with respect to its dimensions, but when the atmosphere is so; but that as arches, like the tops of houses, are open to the air, and at freedom to rise, and all their weight in all changes of heat and cold is the same, their pressure is very little or nothing affected by it.

I hung a thermometer to the arch, where it has continued several days, and by what I can observe it equals, if not exceeds, the thermometer in exactness.

In twenty-four hours it ascends and descends two and three-tenths of an inch at the center, diminishing in exact mathematical proportion each way; and no sooner does an ascent or descent of half a hair's breadth appear at the center, but it may be proportionally discovered through the whole span of ninety feet. I have affixed an index which multiplies ten times, and it can as easily be multiplied a hundred times: could I make a line of fire on each side the arch, so as to heat it in the same equal manner through all its parts, as the natural air does, I would try it up to blood heat.

I will not attempt a description of the construction; first, because you have already seen the model; and secondly, that I have often observed that a thing may be so very simple as to baffle description. On this head I shall only say that I took the idea of construct-

ing it from a spider's web, of which it resembles a section, and I naturally supposed that when nature enabled that insect to make a web she taught it the best method of putting it together.

Another idea I have taken from nature is that of increasing the strength of matter by causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is evidenced in the bones of animals, quills of birds, reeds, canes, etc., which, were they solid with the same quantity of matter, would have the same weight with a much less degree of strength.

I have already mentioned that the quantity of iron in this rib is three tons; that an arch of sufficient width for a bridge is to be composed of as many ribs as that width requires; and that the number of arches, if the breadth of a river requires more than one, may be multiplied at discretion.

As the intention of this experiment was to ascertain, first, the practicability of the construction, and secondly, what degree of strength any given quantity of iron would have when thus formed into an arch, I employed in it no more than three tons, which is as small a quantity as could well be used in the experiment. It has already a weight of six tons constantly lying on it without any effect on the strength or perfect curvature of the arch. What greater weight it

will bear cannot be judged of; but taking even these as data, an arch of any strength, or capable of bearing a greater weight than can ever possibly come upon any bridge, may be easily calculated.

The river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia, as I have already mentioned, requires a single arch of four hundred feet span. The vast quantities of ice render it impossible to erect a bridge on piers, and is the reason why no bridge has been attempted. But great scenes inspire great ideas. The natural mightiness of America expands the mind, and it partakes of the greatness it contemplates. Even the war, with all its evils, had some advantages. It energized invention and lessened the catalogue of impossibilities. At the conclusion of it every man returned to his home to repair the ravages it had occasioned, and *to think of war no more.*

As one among thousands who had borne a share in that memorable Revolution, I returned with them to the re-enjoyment of quiet life, and, that I might not be idle, undertook to construct a bridge of a single arch for this river. Our beloved General [Washington] had engaged in rendering another river, the Potomac, navigable. The quantity of iron I had allowed in my plan for this arch was five hundred and twenty tons to be distributed into thirteen ribs, in

commemoration of the thirteen United States, each rib to contain forty tons; but although strength is the first object in works of this kind, I shall, from the success of this experiment, very considerably lessen the quantity of iron I had proposed.

The Academy of Sciences, in their report upon this construction, say, "there is one advantage in the construction of M. Paine's bridge that is singular and important, which is, that the success of an arch to any span can be determined before the work be undertaken on the river, and with a small part of the expense of the whole by erecting part on the ground."

As to its appearance, I shall give you an extract of a letter from a gentleman in the neighborhood, member in the former Parliament for this county, who, in speaking of the arch, says, "In point of elegance and beauty it far exceeds my expectations, and it is certainly beyond anything I ever saw." I shall likewise mention that it is much visited and exceedingly admired by the ladies, who, though they may not be much acquainted with mathematical principles, are certainly judges of taste.

I shall close my letter with a few other observations naturally and necessarily connected with the subject.

That, contrary to the general opinion, the most preservative situation in which iron can be placed is within the atmosphere of water, whether it be that the air is less saline and nitrous than that which arises from the filth of streets, and the fermentation of the earth, I am not undertaking to prove; I speak only of fact, which anybody may observe by the rings and bolts in wharfs and other watery situations. I never yet saw the iron chain affixed to a well-bucket consumed or injured by rust; and I believe it is impossible to find iron exposed to the open air in the same preserved condition as that which is exposed over water.

A method of extending the span and lessening the height of arches has always been the *desideratum* of bridge architecture. But it has other advantages. It renders bridges capable of becoming a portable manufacture, as they may, on this construction, be made and sent to any part of the world ready to be erected; and at the same time it greatly increases the magnificence, elegance and beauty of bridges, it considerably lessens their expense, and their appearance by repainting will be ever new; and as they may be erected in all situations where stone bridges can be erected, they may, moreover, be erected in certain situations where, on account of ice, infirm founda-

tions in the beds of rivers, low shores and various other causes, stone bridges cannot be erected.

The last convenience, and which is not inconsiderable, that I shall mention is that after they are erected they may very easily be taken down without any injury to the materials of the construction, and be re-erected elsewhere.

I am, sir,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

(*Rotherham, spring of 1789.*)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES

ON his way from Washington City to his old home at Bordentown, New Jersey, Paine had arranged for the exhibition of his bridge model in Philadelphia, where it long remained on public view. Of the two models of bridges left at the Philadelphia Museum, one was in a fair state of preservation as late as 1810, a year after Paine's death, although one side of it had been taken entirely off.

These models were undoubtedly the ones Paine wrote Jefferson about from Paris, in 1800, saying that one was in pasteboard, "five feet span and five inches high from the cords," the other being of metal and of the same dimensions. Of the latter, he wrote: "It is far superior in strength, elegance and readiness in execution to the model I made in America, and which you saw in Paris. . . . I shall bring these models with me when I come home, which will be as soon as I can pass the seas in safety from the piratical John Bulls."

AS bridges and the method of constructing them are becoming objects of great importance throughout the United States, and as there are at this time proposals for a bridge over the Delaware, and also a bridge beginning to be erected over the Schuylkill at Philadelphia, I present the public with some account of the construction of iron bridges.

The following memoir on that subject written last winter at the Federal City, was intended to be presented to Congress. But as the session would necessarily be short, and as several of its members would be replaced by new elections at the ensuing session, it was judged better to let it lie over. In the meantime, on account of the bridges now in con-

templation, or begun, I give the memoir the opportunity of appearing before the public, and the persons concerned in those works.

N.B.—The two models mentioned in this memoir will, I expect, arrive at Philadelphia by the next packet from the Federal City and will remain for some time in Mr. Peale's museum.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, June, 1803.

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

I HAVE deposited in the office of the Secretary of State, and under the care of the Patent Office, two models of iron bridges; the one in pasteboard, the other cast in metal. As they will show by inspection the manner of constructing iron bridges, I shall not take up the time of Congress with a description of them.

My intention in presenting this memoir to Congress is to put the country in possession of the means and of the right of making use of the construction freely; as I do not intend to take any patent right for it.

As America abounds in rivers that interrupt the land communication, and as by violence of floods

and the breaking up of the ice in the spring, the bridges depending for support from the bottom of the river are frequently carried away, I turned my attention, after the Revolutionary War was over, to find a method of constructing an arch that might, without rendering the height inconvenient or the ascent difficult, extend at once from shore to shore, over rivers of three, four or five hundred feet and probably more.

The principle I took to begin with and work upon was that the small segment of a large circle was preferable to the great segment of a small circle. The appearance of such arches, and the manner of forming and putting the parts together, admit of many varieties, but the principle will be the same in all. The bridge architects that I conversed with in England denied the principle, but it was generally supported by mathematicians, and experiment has now established the fact.

In 1786, I made three models, partly at Philadelphia, but mostly at Bordentown in the State of New Jersey. One model was in wood, one in cast iron, and one in wrought iron connected with blocks of wood, representing cast iron blocks, but all on the same principle, that of the small segment of a large circle.

I took the last mentioned one with me to France in 1787 and presented it to the Academy of Sciences at Paris for their opinion of it. The Academy appointed a committee of three of their own body—Mons. Le Roy, the Abbé Bossou, and Mons. Borda. The first was an acquaintance of Dr. Franklin, and of Mr. Jefferson, then minister at Paris. The two others were celebrated as mathematicians. I presented it as a model for a bridge of a single arch of four hundred feet span over the river Schuylkill at Philadelphia. The committee brought in a report which the Academy adopted—that an arch on the principle and construction of the model, in their opinion, might be extended four hundred feet, the extent proposed.

In September of the same year, I sent the model to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society in England, and soon after went there myself.

In order to ascertain the truth of the principle on a larger scale than could be shown by a portable model five or six feet in length, I went to the iron-foundry of Messrs. Walker, at Rotherham, County of Yorkshire, in England, and had a complete rib of 90 feet span, and 5 feet of height from the chord line to the center of the arch, manufactured and erected. It was a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; and

until this was done no experiment on a circle of such an extensive diameter had ever been made in architecture, or the practicability of it supposed.

The rib was erected between a wall of a furnace belonging to the iron-works and the gable end of a brick building, which served as butments. The weight of iron in the rib was three tons, and we loaded it with double its weight in pig-iron. I wrote to Mr. Jefferson who was then at Paris, an account of this experiment, and also to Sir Joseph Banks in London, who in his answer to me says—"I look for many other bold improvements from your countrymen, the Americans, who think with vigor, and are not fettered with the trammels of science before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to advantage."

On the success of this experiment, I entered into an agreement with the iron-founders at Rotherham to cast and manufacture a complete bridge, to be composed of five ribs of 210 feet span, and 5 feet of height from the chord line, being a segment of a circle 610 feet diameter, and sent it to London to be erected as a specimen for establishing a manufactory of iron bridges to be sent to any part of the world.

The bridge was erected at the village of Paddington, near London, but being in a plain field, where

no advantage could be taken of butments without the expense of building them, as in the former case, it served only as a specimen of the practicability of a manufactory of iron bridges. It was brought by sea, packed in the hold of a vessel, from the place where it was made; and after standing a year was taken down without injury to any of its parts, and might be erected anywhere else.

At this time my bridge operations became suspended. Mr. Edmund Burke published his attack on the French Revolution and the system of representative government, and in defense of government by hereditary succession, a thing which is in its nature an absurdity, because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and therefore, so far as wisdom is necessary in a government, it must be looked for where it can be found, sometimes in one family, sometimes in another. History informs us that the son of Solomon was a fool. He lost ten tribes out of twelve (2 Chron. ch. x). There are those in later times who lost thirteen.

The publication of this work by Mr. Burke, absurd in its principles and outrageous in its manner, drew me, as I have said, from my bridge operations, and my time became employed in defending a system then established and operating in America, and which

I wished to see peaceably adopted in Europe. I therefore ceased my work on the bridge to employ myself on the more necessary work, "Rights of Man," in answer to Mr. Burke.

In 1792, a convention was elected in France for the express purpose of forming a Constitution on the authority of the people, as had been done in America, of which convention I was elected a member. I was at this time in England and knew nothing of my being elected till the arrival of the person who was sent officially to inform me of it.

During my residence in France, which was from 1792 to 1802, an iron bridge of 236 feet span, and 34 of height from the chord line, was erected over the river Wear near the town of Sunderland, in the County of Durham, England. It was done chiefly at the expense of the two members of Parliament for that county, Milbanke and Burdon.

It happened that a very intimate friend of mine, Sir Robert Smyth (who was also an acquaintance of Mr. Monroe, the American Minister, and since of Mr. Livingston), was then at Paris. He had been a colleague in Parliament with Milbanke, and supposing that the persons who constructed the iron bridge at Sunderland had made free with my model, which was at the iron-works where the Sunderland bridge

was cast, he wrote to Milbanke on the subject, and the following is that gentleman's answer.

"With respect to the iron bridge over the river Wear at Sunderland, it certainly is a work well deserving admiration, both for its structure and utility, and I have good grounds for saying that the first idea was suggested by Mr. Paine's bridge exhibited at Paddington. What difference there may be in some part of the structure, or in the proportion of wrought and cast iron, I cannot pretend to say, Burdon having undertaken to build the bridge, in consequence of his having taken upon himself whatever the expense might be beyond between three and four thousand pounds sterling, subscribed by myself and some other gentlemen.

"But whatever the mechanism might be, it did not supersede the necessity of a center." * (The writer has here confounded a center with a scaffolding.) "Which center (continues the writer) was esteemed a very ingenious piece of workmanship, and taken from a plan sketched out by Mr. Nash, an architect of great merit, who had been consulted in the outset

* It is the technical term, meaning the boards and numbers which form the arch upon which the permanent materials are laid; when a bridge is finished the workmen say they are ready to strike center, that is to take down the scaffolding.—*Author.*

of the business when a bridge of stone was in contemplation.

"With respect therefore to any gratuity to Mr. Paine, though ever so desirous of rewarding the labors of an ingenious man, I do not feel how, under the circumstances already described, I have it in my power, having had nothing to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription, Mr. Burdon then becoming accountable for the whole. But if you can point out any mode according to which it would be in my power to be instrumental in procuring him any compensation for the advantages the public may have derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the outline of the bridge at Sunderland was taken, be assured it will afford me very great satisfaction.*

"RA. MILBANKE."

The year before I left France, the Government of that country had it in contemplation to erect an iron bridge over the river Seine, at Paris. As all edifices of public construction came under the cognizance of the Minister of the Interior (and as their plan was to erect a bridge of five iron arches of 100 feet span each, instead of passing the river with a single arch,

* The original is in my possession.—*Author.*

and which was going backward in practise, instead of forward, as there was already an iron arch of 230 feet in existence) I wrote the Minister of the Interior, the citizen Chaptal, a memoir on the construction of iron bridges. The following is his answer:

"*The Minister of the Interior to the citizen Thomas Paine.*—I have received, citizen, the observations that you have been so good as to address to me upon the construction of iron bridges. They will be of the greatest utility to us when the new kind of construction goes to be executed for the first time. With pleasure, I assure you, citizen, that you have rights of more than one kind to the thankfulness of nations, and I give you, cordially, the particular expression of my esteem.

—CHAPTAL." *

A short time before I left France, a person came to me from London with plans and drawings for an iron bridge of one arch over the river Thames at London, of 600 feet span, and 60 feet of height from the chord line. The subject was then before a committee of the House of Commons, but I know not the proceedings thereon.

As this new construction of an arch for bridges, and the principles on which it is founded, originated

* The original, in French, is in my possession.—*Author.*

in America, as the documents I have produced sufficiently prove, and is becoming an object of importance to the world, and to no part of it more than to our own country, on account of its numerous rivers, and as no experiment has been made in America to bring it into practise further than on the model I have executed myself and at my own expense, I beg leave to submit a proposal to Congress on the subject, which is:

To erect an experiment rib of about 400 feet span, to be the segment of a circle of at least 1,000 feet diameter, and to let it remain exposed to public view, so that the method of constructing such arches may be generally known.

It is an advantage peculiar to the construction of iron bridges that the success of an arch of a given extent and height can be ascertained without being at the expense of building the bridge; which is, by the method I propose, that of erecting an experiment rib on the ground where advantage can be taken of two hills for butments.

I began in this manner with the rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet of height, being a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter. The undertakers of the Sunderland bridge began in the same manner. They contracted with the iron-founder for a single rib, and,

finding it to answer, had five more manufactured like it and erected into a bridge consisting of six ribs, the experiment rib being one.

But the Sunderland bridge does not carry the principle much further into practise than had been done by the rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet in height, being, as before said, a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; the Sunderland bridge being 206 feet span and 34 feet of height, gives the diameter of the circle of which it is a segment to be 444 feet, within a few inches, which is but a larger segment of a circle 30 feet more diameter.

The construction of those bridges does not come within the line of any established practise of business. The stone architect can derive but little from the theory of practise of his art that enters into his construction of an iron bridge; and the iron-founder, though he may be expert in moulding and casting the parts, when the models are given him, would be at a loss to proportion them, unless he was acquainted with all the lines and properties belonging to a circle.

If it should appear to Congress that the construction of iron bridges will be of utility to the country, and they should direct that an experiment rib be made for that purpose, I will furnish the proportions

for the several parts of the work and give my attendance to superintend the erection of it.

But, in any case, I have to request that this memoir may be put on the journals of Congress, as an evidence hereafter that this new method of constructing bridges originated in America.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, January 3, 1803.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND ON THE INVASION OF ENGLAND [1]

THAT Paine should desire the invasion of England by Napoleon Bonaparte, as this manifesto indicates, may appear inconsistent with his usual humane and peaceful principles. But it must be remembered that England, at the time of Paine's writing (1804), was harrying the world by land and sea, seizing American ships and sailors, and jailing every native patriot who publicly protested against royal outrages. It had become an accepted opinion in Europe that the English people would never stop these outrages until their country was either actually invaded or in imminent peril of invasion.

On returning from his campaign in Italy, in 1797, Napoleon consulted Paine, as here recounted, and invited his company on a projected invasion of England, for the purpose of "liberating the English people."

IN casting my eye over England and America, and comparing them together, the difference is very striking. The two countries were created by the same power, and peopled from the same stock. What then has caused the difference? Have those who emigrated to America improved, or those whom they left behind degenerated? There are as many degrees of difference in the political morality of the two people as there are of longitude between the two countries.

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[1] Paine wrote a letter read by Coupé to the Council of Five Hundred, January 28, 1798:

"CITIZENS REPRESENTATIVES: Though it is not convenient to me, in the present situation of my affairs, to subscribe to the loan toward the descent upon England, my economy permits me to make a small patriotic donation. I send a hundred livres, and with it all the wishes of my heart for the success of the

In the science of cause and effect everything that enters into the composition of either must be allowed its proportion of influence. Investigating, therefore, into the cause of this difference we must take into the calculation the difference of the two systems of government, the *hereditary* and the *representative*.

Under the hereditary system it is the government that forms and fashions the political character of the people. In the representative system it is the people that form the character of the government. Their own happiness as citizens forms the basis of their conduct, and the guide of their choice. Now, is it more probable that a hereditary government should become corrupt, and corrupt the people by its example, or that a whole people should become corrupt, and produce a corrupt government? For the

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descent, and a voluntary offer of any service I can render to promote it.

"There will be no lasting peace for France, nor for the world, until the tyranny and corruption of the English Government be abolished, and England, like Italy, become a sister Republic. As to those men, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who, like Robespierre in France, are covered with crimes, they, like him, have no other resource than committing more. But the mass of the people are the friends of liberty: tyranny and taxation oppress them, but they deserve to be free.

"Accept, Citizens Representatives, the congratulations of an old colleague in the dangers we have passed and on the happy prospect before us. *Salut et respect.*"—*Editor.*

point where the corruption begins becomes the source from whence it afterwards spreads.

While men remained in Europe as subjects of some hereditary potentate they had ideas conformable to that condition; but when they arrived in America they found themselves in possession of a new character, the character of sovereignty; and, like converts to a new religion, they became inspired with new principles. Elevated above their former rank, they considered government and public affairs as part of their own concern, for they were to pay the expense and they watched them with circumspection.

They soon found that government was not that complicated thing, enshrined in mystery, which Church and State, to play into each other's hands, had represented; and that to conduct it with proper effect was to conduct it justly. Common sense, common honesty and civil manners qualify a man for government and, besides this, put man in a situation that requires new thinking, and the mind will grow up to it, for, like the body, it improves by exercise. Man is but a learner all his lifetime.

But whatever be the cause of the difference of character between the government and people of England and those of America, the effect arising from that difference is as distinguishable as the sun from

the moon. We see America flourishing in peace, cultivating friendship with all nations, and reducing her public debt and taxes, incurred by the Revolution. On the contrary, we see England almost perpetually in war, or warlike disputes, and her debt and taxes continually increasing.

Could we suppose a stranger, who knew nothing of the origin of the two countries, he would from observation conclude that America was the *old* country, experienced and sage, and England the *new*, eccentric and wild.

Scarcely had England drawn home her troops from America, after the Revolutionary War, than she was on the point of plunging herself into a war with Holland, on account of the Stadtholder; then with Russia; then with Spain, on the account of Nootka *catskins;* and actually with France to prevent her Revolution. Scarcely had she made peace with France, and before she had fulfilled her own part of the treaty, than she declared war again to avoid fulfilling the treaty.

In her treaty of peace with America, she engaged to evacuate the Western posts within six months, but having obtained peace she refused to fulfil the conditions, and kept possession of the posts and embroiled us in an Indian war. In her treaty of peace

with France, she engaged to evacuate Malta within three months, but having obtained peace she refused to evacuate Malta, and began a new war.

All these matters pass before the eyes of the world, who form their own opinion thereon, regardless of what England newspapers may say of France, or French papers say of England. The non-fulfilment of a treaty is a case that everybody can understand. They reason upon it as they would on a contract between two individuals, and in so doing they reason from a right foundation. The affected pomp and mystification of courts make no alteration in the principle.

Had France declared war to compel England to fulfil the treaty, as a man would commence a civil action to compel a delinquent party to fulfil a contract, she would have stood acquitted in the opinion of nations. But that England still holding Malta, should go to war for Malta, is a paradox not easily solved, unless it be supposed that the peace was insidious from the beginning, that it was concluded with the expectation that the military ardor of France would cool, or a new order of things arise, or a national discontent prevail, that would favor a non-execution of the treaty and leave England arbiter of the fate of Malta.

Something like this, which was like a vision in the clouds, must have been the calculation of the British Ministry; for certainly they did not expect the war would take the turn it has. Could they have foreseen, and they ought to have foreseen, that a declaration of war was the same as sending a challenge to Bonaparte to invade England and make it the seat of war, they hardly would have done it unless they were mad; for in any event such a war might produce, in a military view, it is England would be the sufferer unless it terminated in a wise revolution.

One of the causes assigned for this declaration of war by the British Ministry was that Bonaparte had cramped their commerce. If by cramping their commerce is to be understood that of encouraging and extending the commerce of France, he had a right, and it was his duty to do it. The prerogative of monopoly belongs to no nation. But to make this one of the causes of war, considering their commerce in consequence of that declaration is now cramped ten times more, is like the case of a foolish man who, after losing an eye in fight, renews the combat to revenge the injury, and loses the other eye.

Those who never experienced an invasion, by suffering it, which the English people have not, can have but little idea of it. Between the two armies the

country will be desolated, wherever the armies are, and that as much by their own army as by the enemy. The farmers on the coast will be the first sufferers; for, whether their stock of cattle, corn, etc., be seized by the invading army, or driven off, or burnt, by orders of their own Government, the effect will be the same to them.

As to the revenue, which has been collected altogether in paper, since the bank stopped payment, it will go to destruction the instant an invading army lands; and as to effective government, there can be but little where the two armies are contending for victory in a country small as England is.

With respect to the general politics of Europe, the British Ministry could not have committed a greater error than to make Malta the ostensible cause of the war; for though Malta is an unproductive rock, and will be an expense to any nation that possesses it, there is not a power in Europe will consent that England should have it. It is a situation capable of annoying and controlling the commerce of other nations in the Mediterranean; and the conduct of England on the seas and in the Baltic has shown the danger of her possessing Malta. Bonaparte, by opposing her claim, has all Europe with him: England, by asserting it, loses all.

Had the English Ministry studied for an object that would put them at variance with all nations, from the North of Europe to the South, they could not have done it more effectually.

But what is Malta to the people of England, compared with the evils and dangers they already suffer in consequence of it? It is their own government that has brought this upon them. Were Burke now living, he would be deprived of his exclamation, that "*the age of chivalry is gone*"; for this declaration of war is like a challenge sent from one knight of the sword to another knight of the sword to fight him on the challenger's ground, and England is staked as the prize.

But though the British Ministry began this war for the sake of Malta, they are now artful enough to keep Malta out of sight. Not a word is now said about Malta in any of their Parliamentary speeches and messages. The King's speech is silent upon the subject, and the invasion is put in its place, as if the invasion was the cause of the war and not the consequence of it. This policy is easily seen through. The case is, they went to war *without counting the cost*, or calculating upon events, and they are now obliged to shift the scenes to conceal the disgrace.

If they were disposed to try experiments upon France, they chose for it the worst possible time, as well as the worst possible object. France has now for its chief the most enterprising and fortunate man, either for deep project or daring execution, the world has known for many ages. Compared with him, there is not a man in the British Government, or under its authority, has any chance with him. That he is ambitious, the world knows, and he always was so; but he knew where to stop.

He had reached the highest point of probable expectation, and having reduced all his enemies to peace, had set himself down to the improvement of agriculture, manufactures and commerce at home; and his conversation with the English Ambassador, Whitworth, showed he wished to continue so. In this view of his situation could anything be worse policy than to give to satisfied ambition a new object and provoke it into action? Yet this the British Ministry have done.

The plan of a descent upon England by gunboats began after the first peace with Austria, and the acquisition of Belgium by France. Before that acquisition, France had no territory on the North Sea, and it is there the descent will be carried on. Dunkirk was then her northern limit.

The English coast opposite to France, on the Channel, from the straits between Dover and Calais to the Land's End, about three hundred miles, is high, bold, and rocky, to the height, in many places, perpendicular of three, four or five hundred feet, and it is only where there are breaks in the rocks, as at Portsmouth, Plymouth, etc., that a landing can be made; and as those places could be easily protected, because England was mistress of the Channel, France had no opportunity of making an invasion, unless she could first defeat the English fleet. But the union of Belgium to France makes a new order of things.

The English coast on the North Sea, including the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Lincolnshire, is as level as a bowling green, and approachable in every part for more than two hundred miles. The shore is a clean, firm sand, where a flat-bottomed boat may row dry aground. The country people use it as a raceground, and for other sports, when the tide is out. It is the weak and defenseless part of England, and it is impossible to make it otherwise: and besides this, there is not a port or harbor in it where ships of the line or large frigates can rendezvous for its protection.

The Belgic coast, and that of Holland, which joins it, are directly opposite this defenseless part, and opens a new passage for invasion. The Dutch fisher-

men knew this coast better than the English themselves, except those who live upon it; and the Dutch smugglers know every creek and corner in it.

The original plan, formed in the time of the Directory (but now much more extensive), was to build one thousand boats, each 60 feet long, 16 feet broad, to draw about two feet water, to carry a 24 or 36 pounder in the head, and a field-piece in the stern, to be run out as soon as they touched ground. Each boat was to carry an hundred men, making in the whole one hundred thousand, and to row with twenty or twenty-five oars on a side. Bonaparte was appointed to the command, and by an agreement between him and me, I was to accompany him, as the intention of the expedition was to give the people of England an opportunity of forming a government for themselves, and thereby bring about peace.

I have no reason to suppose this part of the plan is altered, because there is nothing better Bonaparte can do. As to the clamor spread by some of the English newspapers that he comes for plunder, it is absurd. Bonaparte is too good a general to undiscipline and dissolute his army by plundering, and too good a politician, as well as too much accustomed to great achievements, to make plunder his object.

He goes against the Government that has declared war against him.

As the expedition could choose its time of setting off, either after a storm, when the English would be blown off, or in a calm, or in a fog; and as thirty-six hours' rowing would be able to carry it over, the probability is it would arrive, and when arrived no ship of the line or large frigate could approach it, on account of the shoalness of the coast; and besides this, the boats would form a floating battery, close in with the shore, of a thousand pieces of heavy artillery; and the attempt of Nelson against the gun-boats at Boulogne shows the insufficiency of ships in such situations. About two hundred and fifty gun-boats were built, when the expedition was abandoned for that of Egypt, to which the preparations had served as a feint.

The present impolitic war by the English Government has now renewed the plan, and that with much greater energy than before, and with national unanimity. All France is alive to chastise the English Government for recommencing the war, and all Europe stands still to behold it. The preparations for the invasion have already demonstrated to France what England ought never to have suffered her to know, which is, that she can hold the English Govern-

ment in terror, and the whole country in alarm, whenever she pleases, and as long as she pleases, and that without employing a single ship of the line, and more effectually than if she had an hundred sail. The boasted navy of England is outdone by gun-boats! It is a revolution in naval tactics; but we live in an age of revolution.

The preparations in England for defense are also great, but they are marked with an ominous trait of character. There is something sullen on the face of affairs in England. Not an address has been presented to the King by any county, city, town or corporation since the declaration of war. The people unite for the protection of themselves and property against whatever events may happen, but they are *not pleased*, and their silence is the expression of their discontent.

Another circumstance, curious and awkward, was the conduct of the House of Commons with respect to their address to the King, in consequence of the King's speech at the opening of the Parliament. The address, which is always an echo of the speech, was voted without opposition, and this equivocal silence passed for unanimity. The next thing was to present it, and it was made the order for the next day that

the House should go up in a body to the King, with the speaker at their head, for that purpose.

The time fixed was half after three, and it was expected the procession would be numerous, three or four hundred at least, in order to show their zeal and their loyalty and their thanks to the King for his intention of taking the field. But when half after three arrived, only thirty members were present, and without forty (the number that makes a House) the address could not be presented. The sergeant was then sent out, with the authority of a press-warrant, to search for members, and by four o'clock he returned with just enough to make up forty, and the procession set off with the slowness of a funeral; for it was remarked it went slower than usual.

Such a circumstance in such a critical juncture of affairs, and on such an occasion, shows at least a great indifference toward the Government. It was like saying, you have brought us into a great deal of trouble, and we have no *personal* thanks to make to you. We have voted the address, as a customary matter of form, and we leave it to find its way to you as well as it can.

If the invasion succeed, I hope Bonaparte will remember that this war has not been provoked by the people. It is altogether the act of the Government, without their consent or knowledge; and though the

late peace appears to have been insidious from the first, on the part of the Government, it was received by the people with a sincerity of joy.

There is yet, perhaps, one way, if it be not too late, to put an end to this burdensome state of things, and which threatens to be worse; which is, for the people, now they are embodied for their own protection, to instruct their representatives in Parliament to move for the fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, for a treaty ought to be fulfilled. The present is an uncommon case, accompanied with uncommon circumstances, and it must be got over by means suited to the occasion.

What is Malta to them? The possession of it might serve to extend the patronage and influence of the Crown, on the appointment to new offices, and the part that would fall to the people would be to pay the expense. The more acquisitions the Government makes abroad, the more taxes the people have to pay at home. This has always been the case in England.

The non-fulfilment of a treaty ruins the honor of a government and spreads a reproach over the character of a nation. But when a treaty of peace is made with the concealed design of not fulfilling it, and war is declared for the avowed purpose of avoiding it, the case is still worse. The representative system

does not put it in the power of an individual to declare war of his own will. It must be the act of the body of the representatives, for it is their constituents who are to pay the expense.

The state which the people of England are now in shows the extreme danger of trusting this power to the caprice of an individual, whatever title he may bear. In that country this power is assumed by what is called the Crown, for it is not constituted by any legal authority. It is a branch from the trunk of monarchical despotism.

By this impolitic declaration of war the Government of England has put everything to issue; and no wise general would commence an action he might avoid, where nothing is to be gained by gaining a battle, and everything is to be lost by losing it. An invasion and a revolution, which consequently includes that of Ireland, stand now on the same ground. What part the people may finally take in a contest pregnant with such an issue is yet to be known.

By the experiment of raising the country *in mass* the Government has put arms into the hands of men whom they would have sent to Botany Bay but a few months before, had they found a pike in their possession. The honor of this project, which is copied from France, is claimed by Mr. Pitt; and no project

of his has yet succeeded, in the end, except that of raising the taxes and ruining the Bank. All his schemes in the Revolutionary War of France failed of success, and finished in discredit.

If Bonaparte is remarkable for an unexampled series of good fortune, Mr. Pitt is remarkable for a contrary fate, and his want of popularity with the people, whom he deserted and betrayed on the question of a reform of Parliament, sheds no beams of glory round his projects.

If the present eventful crisis, for an eventful one it is, should end in a revolution, the people of England have, within their glance, the benefit of experience both in theory and fact. This was not the case at first. The American Revolution began on untried ground. The representative system of government was then unknown in practise, and but little thought of in theory. The idea that man must be governed by effigy and show, and that superstitious reverence was necessary to establish authority, had so benumbed the reasoning faculties of men that some bold exertion was necessary to shock them into reflection. But the experiment has now been made. The practise of almost thirty years, the last twenty of which have been of peace, notwithstanding the wrong-headed, tumultuous Administration of John Adams, has

proved the excellence of the representative system, and the NEW WORLD is now the preceptor of the OLD. The children are become the fathers of their progenitors.

With respect to the French Revolution, it was begun by good men and on good principles, and I have always believed it would have gone on so had not the provocative interference of foreign powers, of which Pitt was the principal and vindictive agent, distracted it into madness and sown jealousies among the leaders.

The people of England have now two revolutions before them. The one as an example; the other as a warning. Their own wisdom will direct them what to choose and what to avoid, and in everything which regards their happiness, combined with the common good of mankind, I wish them honor and success.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, May, 1804.

CONSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS, AND CHARTERS

PAINE published this argument in pamphlet form, in June, 1805, to prove the unconstitutionality in New York of the power assumed by the legislature to grant charters and thereby defeat the object of annual elections, by placing the act of one legislature beyond the reach of its successor. He proposes that all matters of "extraordinary legislation," such as those involving land grants and incorporations of companies, should be passed only by a legislature succeeding the one in which it was proposed. "Had such an article been originally in the Constitution [of New York] the bribery and corruption employed to seduce and manage the members of the late legislature, in the affair of the Merchants' Bank, could not have taken place. It would not have been worth while to bribe men to do what they had no power of doing."

THE people of Pennsylvania are, at this time, earnestly occupied on the subject of calling a convention to revise their State Constitution, and there can be but little doubt that a revision is necessary. It is a Constitution, they say, for the emolument of lawyers.

It has happened that the constitutions of all the states were formed before any experience had been had on the representative system of government; and it would be a miracle in human affairs that mere theory without experience should start into perfection at once. The Constitution of New York was formed so early as the year 1777.

The subject that occupied and engrossed the mind of the public at that time was the Revolutionary War,

and the establishment of independence, and in order to give effect to the Declaration of Independence by Congress it was necessary that the states severally should make a practical beginning by establishing state constitutions, and trust to time and experience for improvement. The general defect in all the constitutions is that they are modeled too much after the system, if it can be called a system, of the English Government, which in practise is the most corrupt system in existence, for it is corruption systematized.

An idea also generally prevailed at that time of keeping what were called the legislative, the executive, and the judicial powers distinct and separated from each other. But this idea, whether correct or not, is always contradicted in practise; for where the consent of a governor or executive is required to an act before it can become a law, or where he can by his negative prevent an act of the legislature becoming a law, he is effectually a part of the legislature, and possesses full one-half of the powers of a whole legislature.

In this State (New York) this power is vested in a select body of men, composed of the executive, by which is to be understood the governor, the chancellor, and the judges, and called the Council of Revision. This is certainly better than vesting that

power in an individual, if it is necessary to invest it anywhere; but is a direct contradiction to the maxim set up, that those powers ought to be kept separate; for here the executive and the judiciary are united into one power, acting legislatively.

When we see maxims that fail in practise, we ought to go to the root, and see if the maxim be true. Now it does not signify how many nominal divisions, and sub-divisions, and classifications we make, for the fact is, *there are but two powers in any government, the power of willing or enacting the laws, and the power of executing them;* for what is called the *judiciary* is a branch of executive power; it executes the laws; and what is called the *executive* is a superintending power to see that the laws are executed.

Errors in theory are, sooner or later, accompanied with errors in practise; and this leads me to another part of the subject, that of considering a constitution and a government relatively to each other.

A constitution is the act of the people in their original character of sovereignty. A government is a creature of the constitution; it is produced and brought into existence by it. A constitution defines and limits the powers of the government it creates. It therefore follows, as a natural and also a logical result, that the governmental exercise of any power not au-

thorized by the constitution is an assumed power, and therefore illegal.

There is no article in the Constitution of this State, nor of any of the states, that invests the Government in whole or in part with the power of granting charters or monopolies of any kind; the spirit of the times was then against all such speculation; and therefore the assuming to grant them is unconstitutional, and when obtained by bribery and corruption is criminal. It is also contrary to the intention and principle of annual elections.

Legislatures are elected annually, not only for the purpose of giving the people, in their elective character, the opportunity of showing their approbation of those who have acted right, by re-electing them, and rejecting those who have acted wrong; but also for the purpose of correcting the wrong (where any wrong has been done) of a former legislature. But the very intention, essence and principle of annual election would be destroyed if any one legislature, during the year of its authority, had the power to place any of its acts beyond the reach of succeeding legislatures; yet this is always attempted to be done in those acts of a legislature called charters.

Of what use is it to dismiss legislators for having done wrong, if the wrong is to continue on the au-

thority of those who did it? Thus much for things that are wrong. I now come to speak of things that are right and may be necessary.

Experience shows that matters will occasionally arise, especially in a new country, that will require the exercise of a power differently constituted to that of ordinary legislation; and therefore there ought to be in a constitution an article defining how that power shall be constituted and exercised. Perhaps the simplest method, that which I am going to mention, is the best; because it is still keeping strictly within the limits of annual elections, makes no new appointments necessary and creates no additional expense. For example,

That all matters of a different quality to matters of ordinary legislation, such, for instance, as sales or grants of public lands, acts of incorporation, public contracts with individuals or companies beyond a certain amount, shall be proposed in one legislature, and published in the form of a bill, with the yeas and nays, after the second reading, and in that state shall lie over to be taken up by the succeeding legislature; that is, there shall always be, on all such matters, one annual election [which] takes place between the time of bringing in the bill and the time of enacting it into a permanent law.

It is the rapidity with which a self-interested speculation, or a fraud on the public property, can be carried through within the short space of one session, and before the people can be apprised of it, that renders it necessary that a precaution of this kind, unless a better can be devised, should be made an article of the Constitution.

Had such an article been originally in the Constitution, the bribery and corruption employed to seduce and manage the members of the late Legislature, in the affair of the Merchants' Bank, could not have taken place. It would not have been worth while to bribe men to do what they had not the power of doing. That Legislature could only have proposed, but not have enacted the law; and the election then ensuing would, by discarding the proposers, have negatived the proposal without any further trouble.

This method has the appearance of doubling the value and importance of annual elections. It is only by means of elections that the mind of the public can be collected to a point on any important subject; and as it is always the interest of a much greater number of people in a country to have a thing right than to have it wrong, the public sentiment is always worth attending to. It may sometimes err, but never intentionally, and never long.

The experiment of the Merchants' Bank shows it is impossible to bribe a small body of men, but it is always *impossible* to bribe a whole nation; and therefore in all legislative matters that by requiring permanency differ from acts of ordinary legislation, which are alterable or repealable at all times, it is safest that they pass through two legislatures, and a general election intervene between. The elections will always bring up the mind of the country on any important proposed bill; and thus the whole State will be its own *Council of Revision.* It has already passed its *veto* on the Merchants' Bank bill, notwithstanding the *minor* Council of Revision approved it.

COMMON SENSE.

New Rochelle, June 21, 1805.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

To the Citizens of Pennsylvania on the Proposal for Calling a Convention

THIS open letter to the people of Pennsylvania was the last political pamphlet Paine wrote. It was printed, for general distribution, at the "Aurora" office, Philadelphia, and was widely circulated. The gubernatorial election of 1805 turned on this proposal, and the "new constitutionalists" were defeated by the re-election of Thomas McKean, the Jeffersonian-Republican candidate, who remained in office until 1808. McKean was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

In this pamphlet was included the one Paine had written to the people of New York on the subject of Charters, etc. The two essays, written in Paine's sixty-ninth year, and four years before he died, prove that there was no weakening of his intellect, and that despite occasional "flings" at the Federalists, he was still occupied with the principles of political philosophy.

AS I resided in the capital of your State, Philadelphia, in the *time that tried men's souls*, and all my political writings, during the Revolutionary War, were written in that city, it seems natural for me to look back to the place of my political and literary birth, and feel an interest for its happiness. Removed as I now am from the place, and detached from everything of personal party, I address this token to you on the ground of principle and in remembrance of former times and friendships.

The subject now before you is the call of a Convention to examine and, if necessary, to reform the

Constitution of the State; or to speak in the correct language of constitutional order, to propose written articles of reform to be accepted or rejected by the people by vote, in the room of those now existing that shall be judged improper or defective.

There cannot be, on the ground of reason, any objection to this; because if no reform or alteration is necessary the sense of the country will permit none to be made; and, *if necessary*, it *will* be made because it *ought* to be made. Until, therefore, the sense of the country can be collected and made known by a convention elected for that purpose, all opposition to the call of a convention not only passes for nothing, but serves to create a suspicion that the opposers are conscious that the Constitution will not bear an examination.

The Constitution formed by the Convention of 1776, of which Benjamin Franklin (the greatest and most useful man America has yet produced), was president, had many good points in it which were overthrown by the Convention of 1790, under the pretense of making the Constitution conformable to that of the United States; as if the forms and periods of election for a territory extensive as that of the United States is could become a rule for a single state.

The principal defect in the Constitution of 1776 was that it was subject, in practise, to too much precipitancy; but the groundwork of that Constitution was good. The present Constitution appears to me to be clogged with inconsistencies of a hazardous tendency, as a supposed remedy against a precipitancy that might not happen. Investing any individual, by whatever name or official title he may be called, with a negative over the formation of the laws, is copied from the English Government, without ever perceiving the inconsistency and absurdity of it, when applied to the representative system, or understanding the origin of it in England.

The present form of government in England and all those things called prerogatives of the Crown, of which this negative power is one, was established by conquest, not by compact. Their origin was the conquest of England by the Normans, under William of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror, in 1066, and the genealogy of its kings takes its date from him. He is the first of the list.

There is no historical certainty of the time when parliaments began; but be the time when it may, they began by what are called grants or charters from the Norman Conqueror, or his successors, to certain towns, and to counties, to elect members to meet and

serve in Parliament,* subject to his control; and the custom still continues with the King of England calling the Parliament *my Parliament;* that is, a Parliament originating from his authority, and over which he holds control in right of himself, derived from that conquest.

It is from this assumed right, derived from conquest, and not from any constitutional right by compact, that kings of England hold a negative over the formation of the laws; and they hold this for the purpose of preventing any being enacted that might abridge, invade, or in any way affect or diminish what they claim to be their hereditary or family rights and prerogatives, derived originally from the conquest of the country.† This is the origin of the King of England's negative. It is a badge of disgrace which *his* Parliaments are obliged to wear, and to which they are abject enough to submit.

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* *Parliament* is a French word, brought into England by the Normans. It comes from the French verb *parler*—to speak.—*Author.*

† When a king of England (for they are not an English race of kings) negatives an act passed by the Parliament, he does it in the Norman or French language, which was the language of the Conquest, the literal translation of which is, *the king will advise himself of it.* It is the only instance of a king of England speaking French in Parliament; and shows the origin of the negative.—*Author.*

But what has this case to do with a legislature chosen by freemen, on their own authority, in right of themselves? Or in what manner does a person styled Governor or Chief Magistrate resemble a conqueror subjugating a country, as William of Normandy subjugated England, and saying to it, *you shall have no laws but what I please?*

The negativing power in a country like America is of that kind, that a wise man would not choose to be embarrassed with it, and a man fond of using it will be overthrown by it. It is not difficult to see that when Mr. M'Kean negatived the Arbitration Act, he was induced to it as a *lawyer*, for the benefit of the profession, and not as a *magistrate*, for the benefit of the people; for it is the office of a chief magistrate to compose differences and *prevent* lawsuits.

If the people choose to have arbitrations instead of lawsuits why should they not have them? It is a matter that concerns them as individuals, and not as a state or community, and is not a proper case for a governor to interfere in, for it is not a state or government concern: nor does it concern the peace thereof, otherwise than to make it more peaceable by making it less contentious.

This negativing power in the hands of an individual ought to be constitutionally abolished. It is

a dangerous power. There is no prescribing rules for the use of it. It is discretionary and arbitrary; and the will and temper of the person at any time possessing it is its only rule. There must have been great want of reflection in the Convention that admitted it into the Constitution. Would that Convention have put the Constitution it had formed (whether good or bad) in the power of any individual to negative? It would not. It would have treated such a proposal with disdain. Why then did it put the legislatures thereafter to be chosen, and all the laws, in that predicament?

Had that Convention, or the law members thereof, known the origin of the negativing power used by kings of England, from whence they copied it, they must have seen the inconsistency of introducing it into an American Constitution. We are not a conquered people; we know no conqueror; and the negativing power used by kings in England is for the defense of the personal and family prerogatives of the successors of the conqueror against the Parliament and the people. What is all this to us? We know no prerogatives but what belong to the sovereignty of ourselves.

At the time this Constitution was formed, there was a great departure from the principles of the Revo-

First Page of Original Manuscript

of Poem by Paine, entitled "Contentment"

This poem was written to Mrs. Barlow on her pleasantly telling the author that, after writing against the superstition of the Scripture religion, he was selling up a religion capable of more bigotry and enthusiasm, and more dangerous to its votaries—a religion of Love. This poem is given in full in Volume X, page 325. The original manuscript is in the possession of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association.

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Contentment

Or, If you please, Confession.

To Mrs. Barlow, on her pleasantly telling the author that after writing against the superstition of scripture Religion, he was setting up a Religion capable of more bigotry and enthusiasm, and more dangerous to the Votaries, that of making a Religion of Love.

O could we always live and love,
and always be sincere,
I would not wish for heaven above,
my heaven would be here.

Though many Countries I have seen,
and more may chance to see,
My little Corner of the World
Is half the World to me.

The other half, as you may guess,
America contains,
and thus between them I possess
The whole world for my pains.

I'm then contented with my lot,
I can no happier be,
For neither World, I'm sure, has got
So rich a man as me.

Then

lution, among those who then assumed the lead, and the country was grossly imposed upon. This accounts for some inconsistencies that are to be found in the present Constitution, among which is the negativing power inconsistently copied from England. While the exercise of the power over the state remained dormant it remained unnoticed; but the instant it began to be active it began to alarm; and the exercise of it against the rights of the people to settle their private pecuniary differences by the peaceable mode of arbitration, without the interference of lawyers, and the expense and tediousness of courts of law, has brought its existence to a crisis.

Arbitration is of more importance to society than courts of law, and ought to have precedence of them in all cases of pecuniary concerns between individuals or parties of them. Who are better qualified than merchants to settle disputes between merchants, or who better than farmers to settle disputes between farmers? And the same for every other description of men. What do lawyers or courts of law know of these matters? They devote themselves to forms rather than to principles, and the merits of the case become obscure and lost in a labyrinth of verbal perplexities. We do not hear of lawyers going to law

with each other, though they could do it cheaper than other people, which shows they have no opinion of it for themselves.

The principle and rule of arbitration ought to be constitutionally established. The honest sense of a country collected in convention will find out how to do this without the interference of lawyers, who may be hired to advocate any side of any cause; for the case is the practise of the bar is become a species of prostitution that ought to be controlled. It lives by encouraging the injustice it pretends to redress.

Courts in which law is practised are of two kinds. The one for criminal cases, the other for civil cases, or cases between individuals respecting property of any kind or the value thereof. I know not what may be the numerical proportion of these two classes of cases to each other; but that the civil cases are far more numerous than the criminal cases, I make no doubt of. Whether they be ten, twenty, thirty or forty to one, or more, I leave to those who live in the state, or in the several counties thereof, to determine.

But be the proportion what it may, the expense to the public of supporting a judiciary for both will be, in some relative degree, according to the number

of cases the one bears to the other; yet it is only one of them that the public, as a public, have any concern with. The criminal cases, being breaches of the peace, are consequently under the cognizance of the government of the state, and the expense of supporting the courts thereof belongs to the public, because the preservation of the peace is a public concern.

But civil cases, that is, cases of private property between individuals, belong wholly to the individuals themselves; and all that government has consistently to do in the matter is to establish the process by which the parties concerned shall proceed and bring the matter to decision themselves, by referring it to impartial and judicious men of the neighborhood, of their own choosing. This is by far the most convenient, as to time and place, and the cheapest method to them; for it is bringing *justice home to their own doors,* without the chicanery of law and lawyers.

Every case ought to be determined on its own merits, without the farce of what are called precedents, or reports of cases; because, in the first place, it often happens that the decision upon the case brought as a precedent is bad, and ought to be shunned instead of imitated; and, in the second place, because there are no two cases perfectly alike in all

their circumstances, and therefore the one cannot become a rule of decision for the other. It is justice and good judgment that preside by right in a court of arbitration. It is forms, quoted precedents and contrivances for delay and expense to the parties, that govern the proceedings of a court of law.

By establishing arbitrations in the room of courts of law for the adjustment of private cases, the public will be eased of a great part of the expense of the present judiciary establishment; for certainly such a host of judges, associate judges, presidents of circuits, clerks and criers of courts, as are at present supported at the public expense, will not then be necessary. There are, perhaps, more of them than there are criminals to try in the space of a year.

Arbitration will lessen the sphere of patronage, and it is not improbable that this was one of the private reasons for negativing the arbitration act; but public economy, and the convenience and ease of the individuals, ought to have outweighed all such considerations. The present Administration of the United States has struck off a long list of useless officers, and economized the public expenditure, and it is better to make a precedent of this, than to imitate its forms and long periods of election, which require reform themselves.

A great part of the people of Pennsylvania make a principle of not going to law, and others avoid it from prudential reasons; yet all those people are taxed to support a judiciary to which they never resort, which is as inconsistent and unjust as it is in England to make the Quakers pay tithes to support the Episcopal Church. Arbitration will put an end to this imposition.

Another complaint against the Constitution of Pennsylvania is the great quantity of patronage annexed to the office of governor.

Patronage has a natural tendency to increase the public expense by the temptation it leads to (unless in the hands of a wise man like Franklin) to multiply offices within the gift or appointment of that patronage. John Adams, in his Administration, went upon the plan of increasing offices and officers. He expected by thus increasing his patronage, and making numerous appointments, that he should attach a numerous train of adherents to him who would support his measures and his future election.

He copied this from the corrupt system of England; and he closed his midnight labors by appointing sixteen new unnecessary judges, at an expense to the public of $32,000 annually. John counted only on one side of the case. He forgot that where

there was *one* man to be benefited by an appointment, all the rest had to pay the cost of it; and that by attaching *the one* to him by patronage, he ran the risk of losing *the many* by disgust. And such was the consequence; and such will ever be the consequence in a free country, where men reason *for* themselves and *from* themselves, and not from the dictates of others.

The less quantity of patronage a man is *incumbered* with the safer he stands. He cannot please everybody by the use of it; and he will have to refuse, and consequently to displease, a greater number than he can please. Mr. Jefferson gained more friends by dismissing a long train of officers than John Adams did by appointing them. Like a wise man, Mr. Jefferson dismantled himself of patronage.

The Constitution of New York, though like all the rest it has its defects, arising from want of experience in the representative system of government at the time it was formed, has provided much better in this case than the Constitution of Pennsylvania has done.

The appointments in New York are made by a *Council of Appointment,* composed of the Governor and a certain number of members of the Senate taken from different parts of the State. By this means they

have among them a personal knowledge of whomsoever they appoint. The Governor has one vote, but no negative. I do not hear complaints of the abuse of this kind of patronage.

The Constitution of Pennsylvania, instead of being an improvement in the representative system of government, is a departure from the principles of it. It is a copy in miniature of the Government of England, established at the conquest of that country by William of Normandy. I have shown this in part in the case of the king's negative, and I shall show it more fully as I go on. This brings me to speak of the Senate.

The complaint respecting the Senate is the length of its duration, being four years. The sage Franklin has said, "Where annual election ends, tyranny begins"; and no man was a better judge of human nature than Franklin, nor has any man in our time exceeded him in the principles of honor and honesty.

When a man ceases to be accountable to those who elected him, and with whose public affairs he is intrusted, he ceases to be their representative, and is put in a condition of being their despot. He becomes the representative of nobody but himself. *I am elected,* says he, *for four years; you cannot turn me out, neither am I responsible to you in the meantime. All that you have to do with me is to pay me.*

The conduct of the Pennsylvania Senate in 1800, respecting the choice of electors for the Presidency of the United States, shows the impropriety and danger of such an establishment. The manner of choosing electors ought to be fixed in the Constitution, and not be left to the caprice of contention. It is a matter equally as important, and concerns the rights and interests of the people as much as the election of members for the State Legislature, and in some instances much more.

By the conduct of the Senate at that time, the people were deprived of their right of suffrage, and the State lost its consequence in the Union. It had but one vote. The other fourteen were paired off by compromise—seven and seven. If the people had chosen the electors, which they had a right to do, for the electors were to represent *them* and not to represent the Senate, the State would have had fifteen votes which would have counted.

The Senate is an imitation of what is called the House of Lords in England, and which Chesterfield, who was a member of it, and therefore knew it, calls "*the Hospital of Incurables.*" The Senate in Pennsylvania is not quite a hospital of incurables, but it took almost four years to bring it to a *state of convalescence.*

Before we imitate anything, we ought to examine whether it be worth imitating, and had this been done by the Convention at that time, they would have seen that the model from which their mimic imitation was made, was no better than unprofitable and disgraceful lumber.

There was no such thing in England as what is called the House of Lords until the conquest of that country by the Normans, under William the Conqueror, and like the king's negative over the laws, it is a badge of disgrace upon the country; for it is the effect and evidence of its having been reduced to unconditional submission.

William, having made the conquest, dispossessed the owners of their lands, and divided those lands among the chiefs of the plundering army he brought with him, and from hence arose what is called the *House of Lords.* Daniel de Foe, in his historical satire entitled "The True-born Englishman," has very concisely given the origin and character of this House, as follows:

The great invading Norman let them know
What conquerors, in after times, might do;
To every musketeer he brought to town,
He gave the lands that never were his own—
He cantoned out the country to his men,

And every soldier was a denizen;
No parliament his army could disband.
He raised no money, for he paid in land;
The rascals, thus enriched, he called them *Lords.*
To please their upstart pride with new made words,
And Domesday Book his tyranny records;
Some show the sword, the bow, and some the spear,
Which their great ancestor, forsooth, did wear;
But who the hero was, no man can tell,
Whether a colonel or a corporal;
The silent record blushes to reveal
Their undescended dark original;
Great ancestors of yesterday they show,
And Lords whose fathers were—*the Lord knows who?*

This is the disgraceful origin of what is called the House of Lords in England, and it still retains some tokens of the plundering baseness of its origin. The swindler Dundas [1] was lately made a lord, and is now called *noble lord!* Why do they not give him his proper title, and call him *noble swindler,* for he swindled by wholesale? But it is probable he will escape punishment; for Blackstone, in his commentary on the laws, recites an act of Parliament, passed in 1550, and not since repealed, that extends what

[1] Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, had been Pitt's ablest coadjutor, and hence anathema to Paine. He was impeached on charges made against him as Treasurer of the Navy, but, as Paine predicts, was acquitted by the House of Lords.—*Editor.*

is called the benefit of clergy, that is, exemption from punishment for all clerical offenses, to all lords and peers of the realm who could not read, as well as those who could, and also for "the crimes of *house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing and robbing of churches.*"

This is consistent with the original establishment of the House of Lords, for it was originally composed of robbers. This is aristocracy. This is one of the pillars of John Adams' "stupendous fabric of human invention." A privilege for house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing and robbing of churches! John Adams knew but little of the origin and practise of the Government of England. As to constitution, it has none.

The Pennsylvania Convention of 1776 copied nothing from the English Government. It formed a Constitution on the basis of honesty. The defect, as I have already said, of that Constitution was the precipitancy to which the legislatures might be subject in enacting laws. All the members of the Legislature established by that Constitution sat in one chamber and debated in one body, and this subjected them to precipitancy. This precipitancy was provided against, but not effectually.

The Constitution ordered that the laws, before being finally enacted, should be published for public consideration. But as no given time was fixed for that consideration, nor any means for collecting its effects, nor were there then any public newspapers in the State but what were printed in Philadelphia, the provision did not reach the intention of it, and thus a good and wise intention sank into mere form, which is generally the case when the means are not adequate to the end.

The ground-work, however, of that Constitution was good, and deserves to be resorted to. Everything that Franklin was concerned in producing merits attention. He was the wise and benevolent friend of man. Riches and honors made no alternation in his principles or his manners.

The Constitution of 1776 was conformable to the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Rights, which the present Constitution is not; for it makes artificial distinctions among men in the right of suffrage, which the principles of equity know nothing of; neither is it consistent with sound policy. We every day see the rich becoming poor, and those who were poor before, becoming rich. Riches, therefore, having no stability, cannot and ought not to be made a criterion of right. Man is man in every condition

of life, and the varieties of fortune and misfortune are open to all.

Had the number of representatives in the Legislature established by that Constitution been increased, and instead of their sitting together in one chamber, and debating and voting all at one time, been divided by lot into two equal parts, and sat in separate chambers, the advantage would have been, that one-half, by not being entangled in the first debate, nor having committed itself by voting, would be silently possessed of the arguments, for and against, of the former part, and be in a calm condition to review the whole.

And instead of one chamber, or one house, or by whatever name they may be called, negativing the vote of the other, which is now the case, and which admits of inconsistencies even to absurdities, to have added the votes of both chambers together, and the majority of the whole to be the final decision—there would be reason in this, but there is none in the present mode. The instance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate, in the year 1800, on the bill for choosing electors, where a small majority in that House controlled and negatived a large majority in the other House, shows the absurdity of such a division of legislative power.

To know if any theory or position be true or rational in practise, the method is to carry it to its greatest extent; if it be not true upon the whole, or be absurd, it is so in all its parts, however small. For instance, if one house consists of 200 members and the other 50, which is about the proportion they are in some of the States, and if a proposed law be carried on the affirmative in the larger house with only one dissenting voice, and be negatived in the smaller house by a majority of 1, the event will be that 27 control and govern 223, which is too absurd even for argument, and totally inconsistent with the principles of representative government, which know no difference in the value and importance of its members but what arises from their virtues and talents, and not at all from the name of the house or chamber they sit in.

As the practise of a smaller number negativing a greater is not founded in reason, we must look for its origin in some other cause.

The Americans have copied it from England, and it was brought into England by the Norman Conqueror, and is derived from the ancient French practise of voting by ORDERS, of which they counted three; *the Clergy* (that is, Roman Catholic clergy), the *Noblesse* (those who had titles), and the *Tiers*

État, or Third Estate,* which included all who were not of the two former orders, and which in England are called the *Commons* or *common people*, and the house in which they are represented is from thence called the *House of Commons*.

The case with the Conqueror was, in order to complete and secure the conquest he had made, and hold the country in subjection, he cantoned it out among the chiefs of his army, to whom he gave castles and whom he dubbed with the title of *Lords*, as is before shown. These being dependent on the Conqueror, and having a united interest with him, became the defenders of his measures, and the guardians of his assumed prerogative against the people; and when the house called the *Common House of Parliament* began by grants and charters from the Conqueror and his successors, these lords, claiming to be a distinct ORDER from the Commons, though smaller in number, held a controlling or negative vote over them, and from hence arose the irrational practise of a smaller number negativing a greater.

* The practise of voting by *orders* in France, whenever the States-General met, continued until the late Revolution. It was the present Abbé Sieyès who made the motion, in what was afterward called the National Assembly, for abolishing the vote by *orders*, and established the rational practise of deciding by a majority of numbers.—*Author.*

But what are these things to us, or why should we imitate them? We have but one ORDER in America, and that of the highest degree, the ORDER OF SOVEREIGNTY, and of this ORDER every citizen is a member of his own personal right. Why then have we descended to the base imitation of inferior things? By the event of the Revolution we were put in a condition of thinking originally. The history of past ages shows scarcely anything to us but instances of tyranny and antiquated absurdities. We have copied some of them and experienced the folly of them.

Another subject of complaint in Pennsylvania is the judiciary, and this appears to require a thorough reform. Arbitration will of itself reform a great part, but much will remain to require amendment. The courts of law still continue to go on, as to practise, in the same manner as when the State was a British colony. They have not yet arrived at the dignity of independence. They hobble along by the stilts and crutches of English and antiquated precedents. Their pleadings are made up of cases and reports from English law books; many of which are tyrannical, and all of them now foreign to us.

Our courts require to be domesticated, for as they are at present conducted, they are a dishonor to the national sovereignty. Every case in America ought

to be determined on its own merits, according to American laws, and all reference to foreign adjudications prohibited. The introduction of them into American courts serves only to waste time, embarrass causes and perplex juries. This reform alone will reduce cases to a narrow compass easily understood.

The terms used in courts of law, in sheriffs' sales, and on several other occasions, in writs, and other legal proceedings, require reform. Many of those terms are Latin, and others French. The Latin terms were brought into Britain by the Romans, who spoke Latin, and who continued in Britain between 400 and 500 years, from the first invasion of it by Julius Cæsar, fifty-two years before the Christian era. The French terms were brought by the Normans when they conquered England in 1066, as I have before shown, and whose language was French.

These terms being still used in English law courts show the origin of those courts, and are evidence of the country having been under foreign jurisdiction. But they serve to *mystify*, by not being generally understood, and therefore they serve the purpose of what is called law, whose business is to perplex; and the courts in England put up with the disgrace of recording foreign jurisdiction and foreign conquest, for the sake of using terms which the clients and the

public do not understand, and from thence to create the false belief that law is a learned science, and lawyers are learned men.

The English pleaders, in order to keep up the farce of the profession, always compliment each other, though in contradiction, with the title of *my learned brother*. Two farmers or two merchants will settle cases by arbitration which lawyers cannot settle by law. Where then is the learning of the law, or what is it good for?

It is here necessary to distinguish between *lawyer's law*, and *legislative law*. Legislative law is the law of the land, enacted by our own legislators, chosen by the people for that purpose. Lawyer's law is a mass of opinions and decisions, many of them contradictory to each other, which courts and lawyers have instituted themselves, and is chiefly made up of law-reports of cases taken from English law books. The case of every man ought to be tried by the laws of his own country, which he knows, and not by opinions and authorities from other countries, of which he may know nothing. A lawyer, in pleading, will talk several hours about law, but it is *lawyer's law*, and not *legislative law*, that he means.

The whole of the judiciary needs reform. It is very loosely appointed in most of the states, and also

in the general government. The case, I suppose, has been, that the judiciary department in a constitution has been left to the lawyers, who might be in a convention, to form, and they have taken care to leave it loose. To say, that a judge shall hold his office during *good behavior,* is saying nothing; for the term *good behavior* has neither a legal nor a moral definition.

In the common acceptation of the term, it refers rather to a style of manners than to principles, and may be applied to signify different and contradictory things. A child of good behavior, a judge of good behavior, a soldier of good behavior in the field, and a dancing-master of good behavior in his school, cannot be [of] the same good behavior. What then is the good behavior of a judge?

Many circumstances in the conduct and character of a man may render him unfit to hold the office of a judge, yet not amount to cause of impeachment, which always supposes the commission of some known crime. Judges ought to be held to their duty by continual responsibility, instead of which the Constitution releases them from all responsibility, except by impeachment, from which, by the loose, undefined establishment of the judiciary, there is always a hole to creep out. In annual elections for legis-

lators, every legislator is responsible every year, and no good reason can be given why those intrusted with the execution of the laws should not be as responsible, at stated periods, as those intrusted with the power of enacting them.

Releasing the judges from responsibility is in imitation of an act of the English Parliament for rendering the judges so far independent of what is called the Crown, as not to be removable by it. The case is that judges in England are appointed by the Crown, and are paid out of the King's civil list, as being his representatives when sitting in court; and in all prosecutions for treason and criminal offenses the King is the prosecutor.

It was therefore reasonable that the judge, before whom a man was to be tried, should not be dependent for the tenure of his office on the will of the prosecutor. But this is no reason that in a government founded on the representative system a judge should not be responsible, and also removable by some constitutional mode, without the tedious and expensive formality of impeachment. We remove or turn out presidents, governors, senators and representatives without this formality. Why then are judges, who are generally lawyers, privileged with duration? It

is, I suppose, because lawyers have had the formation of the judiciary part of the Constitution.

The term, "contempt of court," which has caused some agitation in Pennsylvania, is also copied from England; and in that country it means *contempt of the King's authority or prerogative in court,* because the judges appear there as his representatives, and are styled in their commissions, when they open a court, "His Majesty the King's Justices."

This now undefined thing called *contempt of court* is derived from the Norman Conquest of England, as is shown by the French words used in England, with which proclamation for silence, "on pain of imprisonment," begins, "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez." * This shows it to be of Norman origin. It is, however, a species of despotism; for contempt of court is now anything a court imperiously pleases to call so, and then it inflicts punishment as by prerogative without trial, as in Passmore's case, which has a good deal agitated the public mind. This practise requires to be constitutionally regulated, but not by lawyers.

Much yet remains to be done in the improvement of constitutions. The Pennsylvania Convention, when it meets, will be possessed of advantages which those that preceded it were not. The ensuing Con-

* French for "hear ye, hear ye, hear ye."—*Author.*

vention will have two constitutions before them; that of 1776, and that of 1790, each of which continued about fourteen years. I know no material objection against the Constitution of 1776, except that in practise it might be subject to precipitancy; but this can be easily and effectually remedied, as the annexed essay, respecting "Constitutions, Governments and Charters," will show. But there have been many and great objections and complaints against the present Constitution and the practise upon it arising from the improper and unequal distribution it makes of power.

The circumstance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate in the year 1800, on the bill passed by the House of Representatives for choosing electors, justifies Franklin's opinion, which he gave by request of the Convention of 1776, of which he was president, respecting the propriety or impropriety of two houses negativing each other. "It appears to me," said he, "like putting one horse before a cart and the other behind it, and whipping them both. If the horses are of equal strength, the wheels of the cart, like the wheels of government, will stand still; and if the horses are strong enough, the cart will be torn to pieces."

It was only the moderation and good sense of the country, which did not engage in the dispute raised by the Senate, that prevented Pennsylvania from being torn to pieces by commotion.

Inequality of rights has been the cause of all the disturbances, insurrections and civil wars that ever happened in any country, in any age of mankind. It was the cause of the American Revolution, when the English Parliament sat itself up to *bind America in all cases whatsoever*, and to reduce her to unconditional submission. It was the cause of the French Revolution; and also of the civil wars in England, in the time of Charles and Cromwell, when the House of Commons voted the House of Lords useless.

The fundamental principle in representative government is that *the majority governs;* and as it will be always happening that a man may be in the minority on one question, and in the majority on another, he obeys by the same principle that he rules. But when there are two houses of unequal numbers, and the smaller number negativing the greater, it is the minority that governs, which is contrary to the principle. This was the case in Pennsylvania in 1800.

America has the high honor and happiness of being the first nation that gave to the world the example

of forming written constitutions by conventions elected expressly for the purpose, and of improving them by the same procedure, as time and experience shall show necessary. Government in other nations, vainly calling themselves civilized, has been established by bloodshed. Not a drop of blood has been shed in the United States in consequence of establishing constitutions and governments by her own peaceful system. The silent vote, or the simple *yea* or *nay*, is more powerful than the bayonet, and decides the strength of numbers without a blow.

I have now, citizens of Pennsylvania, presented you, in good will, with a collection of thoughts and historical references, condensed into a small compass that they may circulate the more conveniently. They are applicable to the subject before you, that of calling a convention, in the progress and completion of which I wish you success and happiness, and the honor of showing a profitable example to the States around you and to the world.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

New Rochelle, N. Y., August, 1805.

THE CAUSE OF THE YELLOW FEVER

And the Means of Preventing It In Places Not Yet Infected With It

Addressed to the Board of Health in America

THE distinguished physician, Dr. John Wakefield Francis (1789-1861), in his recollections of "Old New York," takes occasion to praise this "timely" essay, written in 1806, to which indeed Paine had given considerable time and study. Dr. Francis, who, as a young man, knew and admired Paine, was prominent in the New York Historical Society.

In a letter to Jefferson, as far back as September 23, 1803, Paine observed: "We are still afflicted with the yellow fever, and the doctors are disputing whether it is an imported or domestic disease. Would it not be a good measure to prohibit the arrival of all vessels from the West Indies from the last of June to the middle of October? If this was done and we escaped the fever next summer, we should always know how to escape it. I question if quarantine is sufficient guard."

A GREAT deal has been written respecting the yellow fever. First, with respect to its causes, whether domestic or imported. Secondly, on the mode of treating it.

What I am going to suggest in this essay is to ascertain some point to begin at, in order to arrive at the cause, and for this purpose some preliminary observations are necessary.

The yellow fever always begins in the lowest part of a populous mercantile town near the water, and continues there, without affecting the higher parts. The sphere or

circuit it acts in is small, and it rages most where large quantities of new ground have been made by banking out the river, for the purpose of making wharfs.

The appearance and prevalence of the yellow fever in these places, being those where vessels arrive from the West Indies, has caused the belief that the yellow fever was imported from thence; but here are two cases acting in the same place: the one, the condition of the ground at the wharves, which being new made on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river, is different from the natural condition of the ground in the higher parts of the city, and consequently subject to produce a different kind of effluvia or vapor; the other case is the arrival of vessels from the West Indies.

In the State of Jersey neither of these cases has taken place; no shipping arrives there, and consequently there have been no embankments for the purpose of wharfs; and the yellow fever has never broken out in Jersey. This, however, does not decide the point as to the immediate cause of the fever, but it shows that this species of fever is not common to the country in its natural state; and, I believe the same was the case in the West Indies before embankments began for the purpose of making wharfs, which al-

ways alter the natural condition of the ground. No old history, that I know of, mentions such a disorder as the yellow fever.

A person seized with the yellow fever in an affected part of the town, and brought into the healthy part, or into the country, and among healthy persons, does not communicate it to the neighborhood, or to those immediately around him; why then are we to suppose it can be brought from the West Indies, a distance of more than a thousand miles, since we see it cannot be carried from one town to another, nor from one part of a town to another, at home? Is it in the air?

This question on the case requires a minute examination. In the first place, the difference between air and wind is the same as between a stream of water and a standing water. A stream of water is water in motion, and wind is air in motion. In a gentle breeze the whole body of air, as far as the breeze extends, moves at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour; in a high wind, at the rate of seventy, eighty or an hundred miles an hour: when we see the shadow of a cloud gliding on the surface of the ground we see the rate at which the air moves, and it must be a good trotting horse that can keep pace with the shadow,

even in a gentle breeze; consequently, a body of air that is in and over any place of the same extent as the affected part of a city may be, will, in the space of an hour, even at the moderate rate I speak of, be moved seven or eight miles to leeward; and its place, in and over the city, will be supplied by a new body of air coming from a healthy part, seven or eight miles distant the contrary way; and then on in continual succession.

The disorder, therefore, is not in the air, considered in its natural state, and never stationary. This leads to another consideration of the case.

An impure effluvia, arising from some cause in the ground, in the manner that fermenting liquors produce near their surface an effluvia that is fatal to life, will become mixed with the air contiguous to it, and as fast as that body of air moves off it will impregnate every succeeding body of air, however pure it may be when it arrives at the place.

The result from this state of the case is, that the impure air, or vapor, that generates the yellow fever, issues from the earth, that is, from the new made earth, or ground raised on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river; and which impregnates every fresh body of air that comes over the place, in like manner

as air becomes heated when it approaches or passes over fire, or becomes offensive in smell when it approaches or passes over a body of corrupt vegetable or animal matter in a state of putrefaction.

The muddy bottom of rivers contains great quantities of impure and often inflammable air (carbureted hydrogen gas), injurious to life; and which remains entangled in the mud till let loose from thence by some accident. This air is produced by the dissolution and decomposition of any combustible matter falling into the water and sinking into the mud, of which the following circumstance will serve to give some explanation.

In the fall of the year that New York was evacuated (1783), General Washington had his headquarters at Mrs. Berrian's, at Rocky Hill, in Jersey, and I was there; the Congress then sat at Prince Town [Princeton]. We had several times been told that the river or creek that runs near the bottom of Rocky Hill, and over which there is a mill, might be set on fire, for that was the term the country people used; and as General Washington had a mind to try the experiment, General Lincoln, who was also there, undertook to make preparation for it against the next evening, November fifth. This was to be done, as we

were told, by disturbing the mud at the bottom of the river, and holding something in a blaze, as paper or straw, a little above the surface of the water.

Colonels Humphreys and Cobb were at that time aides-de-camp of General Washington, and those two gentlemen and myself got into an argument respecting the cause. Their opinion was that, on disturbing the bottom of the river, some bituminous matter arose to the surface, which took fire when the light was put to it; I, on the contrary, supposed that a quantity of inflammable air was let loose, which ascended through the water and took fire above the surface. Each party held to his opinion, and the next evening the experiment was to be made.

A scow had been stationed in the mill dam, and General Washington, General Lincoln and myself, and I believe Colonel Cobb (for Humphreys was sick), and three or four soldiers with poles, were put on board the scow. General Washington placed himself at one end of the scow and I at the other; each of us had a roll of cartridge paper, which we lighted and held over the water about two or three inches from the surface when the soldiers began disturbing the bottom of the river with the poles.

As General Washington sat at one end of the scow and I at the other, I could see better anything that

might happen from his light than I could from my own, over which I was nearly perpendicular. When the mud at the bottom was disturbed by the poles, the air bubbles rose fast, and I saw the fire take from General Washington's light and descend from thence to the surface of the water, in a similar manner as when a lighted candle is held so as to touch the smoke of a candle just blown out the smoke will take fire and the fire will descend and light up the candle. This was demonstrative evidence that what was called setting the river on fire was setting on fire the inflammable air that arose out of the mud.

I mentioned this experiment to Mr. Rittenhouse of Philadelphia the next time I went to that city, and our opinion on the case was that the air or vapor that issued from any combustible matter (vegetable or otherwise), that underwent a dissolution and decomposition of its parts, either by fire or water in a confined place, so as not to blaze, would be inflammable and would become flame whenever it came in contact with flame.

In order to determine if this was the case, we filled up the breech of a gun barrel about five or six inches with sawdust, and the proper part with dry sand to the top, and after spiking up the touch-hole, put the breech into a smith's furnace and kept it red hot, so

as to consume the sawdust; the sand of consequence would prevent any blaze.

We applied a lighted candle to the mouth of the barrel; as the first vapor that flew off would be humid, it extinguished the candle; but after applying the candle three or four times, the vapor that issued out began to flash; we then tied a bladder over the mouth of the barrel, which the vapor soon filled, and then tying a string round the neck of the bladder, above the muzzle, took the bladder off.

As we could not conveniently make experiments upon the vapor while it was in the bladder, the next operation was to get it into a phial. For this purpose, we took a phial of about three or four ounces, filled it with water, put a cork slightly into it, and introducing it into the neck of the bladder, worked the cork out, by getting hold of it through the bladder, into which the water then emptied itself, and the air in the bladder ascended into the phial; we then put the cork into the phial, and took it from the bladder. It was now in a convenient condition for experiment.

We put a lighted match into the phial, and the air or vapor in it blazed up in the manner of a chimney on fire; we extinguished it two or three times, by stopping the mouth of the phial; and putting the lighted match to it again it repeatedly took fire, till

the vapor was spent, and the phial became filled with atmospheric air. These two experiments, that in which some combustible substance (branches and leaves of trees) had been decomposed by water, in the mud; and this, where the decomposition had been produced by fire, without blazing, shows that a species of air injurious to life, when taken into the lungs, may be generated from substances which, in themselves, are harmless.

It is by means similar to these that charcoal, which is made by fire without blazing, emits a vapor destructive to life. I now come to apply these cases, and the reasoning deduced therefrom, to account for the cause of the yellow fever.*

First.—The yellow fever is not a disorder produced by the climate naturally, or it would always have been here in the hot months. The climate is the same now as it was fifty or a hundred years ago; there was no yellow fever then, and it is only within the last twelve years, that such a disorder has been known in America.

Secondly.—The low grounds on the shores of the rivers, at the cities where the yellow fever is annually

* The author does not mean to infer that the inflammable air or carbureted hydrogen gas, is the cause of the yellow fever; but that perhaps it enters into some combination with miasma generated in low grounds, which produces the disease.—*Author.*

generated, and continues about three months without spreading, were not subject to that disorder in their natural state, or the Indians would have forsaken them; whereas, they were the parts most frequented by the Indians in all seasons of the year, on account of fishing. The result from these cases is that the yellow fever is produced by some new circumstance not common to the country in its natural state, and the question is what is that new circumstance?

It may be said that everything done by the white people, since their settlement in the country, such as building towns, clearing lands, leveling hills, and filling valleys, is a new circumstance; but the yellow fever does not accompany any of these new circumstances. No alteration made on the dry land produces the yellow fever; we must therefore look to some other new circumstances, and we now come to those that have taken place between wet and dry, between land and water.

The shores of the rivers at New York, and also at Philadelphia, have on account of the vast increase of commerce, and for the sake of making wharfs, undergone great and rapid alterations from their natural state within a few years; and it is only in such parts of the shores where those alterations have taken

place that the yellow fever has been produced. The parts where little or no alteration has been made, either on the East or North River, and which continue in their natural state, or nearly so, do not produce the yellow fever. The fact therefore points to the cause.

Besides several new streets gained from the river by embankment, there are upwards of eighty new wharfs made since the war, and the much greater part within the last ten or twelve years; the consequence of which has been that great quantities of filth or combustible matter deposited in the muddy bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, and which produced no ill effect while exposed to the air, and washed twice every twenty-four hours by the tide water, have been covered over several feet deep with new earth, and pent up, and the tide excluded. It is in these places, and in these only, that the yellow fever is produced.

Having thus shown, from the circumstances of the case, that the cause of the yellow fever is in the place where it makes its appearance, or rather, in the pernicious vapor issuing therefrom, I go to show a method of constructing wharfs, where wharfs are yet to be constructed (as on the shore on the East River

at Corlder's Hook, and also on the North River) that will not occasion the yellow fever, and which may also point out a method of removing it from places already infected with it.

Instead, then, of embanking out the river and raising solid wharfs of earth on the mud bottom of the shore, the better method would be to construct wharfs on arches, built of stone; the tide will then flow in under the arch, by which means the shore, and the muddy bottom, will be washed and kept clean, as if they were in their natural state, without wharfs.

When wharfs are constructed on the shore lengthways, that is without cutting the shore up into slips, arches can easily be turned, because arches joining each other lengthways serve as butments to each other; but when the shore is cut up into slips there can be no butments; in this case wharfs can be formed on stone pillars, or wooden piles planked over on the top.

In either of these cases, the space underneath will be commodious shelter or harbor for small boats, which can come in and go out always, except at low water, and be secure from storms and injuries. This method besides preventing the cause of the yellow fever, which I think it will, will render the wharfs

more productive than the present method, because of the space preserved within the wharf.

I offer no calculation of the expense of constructing wharfs on arches or piles; but on a general view, I believe they will not be so expensive as the present method. A very great part of the expense of making solid wharfs of earth is occasioned by the carriage of materials, which will be greatly reduced by the methods here proposed, and still more so were the arches to be constructed of cast iron blocks. I suppose that one ton of cast iron blocks would go as far in the construction of an arch as twenty tons of stone.

If, by constructing wharfs in such a manner that the tide water can wash the shore and bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, as they are washed in their natural condition, the yellow fever can be prevented from generating in places where wharfs are yet to be constructed, it may point out a method of removing it, at least by degrees, from places already infected with it; which will be by opening the wharfs in two or three places in each, and letting the tide water pass through; the parts opened can be planked over, so as not to prevent the use of the wharf.

In taking up and treating this subject, I have considered it as belonging to natural philosophy, rather

than medicinal art; and therefore I say nothing about the treatment of the disease after it takes place; I leave that part to those whose profession it is to study it.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, June 27, 1806.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

IT IS curious that this article should have been published (October 20, 1806) in "The American Citizen," whose editor, James Cheetham, turned out to be Paine's most formidable enemy. Paine observed, soon after he took up a residence in New York, the shifty course of this newspaper. But it was the only Republican paper in the city, and Paine contributed to it intermittently until a rival Republican journal, "The Public Advertiser," was started by a Mr. Frank, to whom Paine transferred his pen. This enraged Cheetham, and resulted in a duel between the two editors, neither of whom was injured.

Paine wrote a letter to the "Evening Post," saying that Cheetham should have challenged him instead of Frank, and mentioned an opinion expressed by President Jefferson in a letter to him. Cheetham pronounced it a fabrication. For this Paine started a suit for slander, but died before it came to trial. Paine had witnessed in France the terrible effects of personal libels shielded under the liberty of the press.

THE writer of this remembers a remark made to him by Mr. Jefferson concerning the English newspapers, which at that time, 1787, while Mr. Jefferson was Minister at Paris, were most vulgarly abusive. The remark applies with equal force to the Federal papers of America. The remark was, that "the licentiousness of the press produces the same effect as the restraint of the press was intended to do if the restraint was to prevent things being told, and the licentiousness of the press prevents things being believed when they are told."

We have in this State an evidence of the truth of this remark. The number of Federal papers in the

city and State of New York, are more than five to one to the number of Republican papers, yet the majority of the elections go always against the Federal papers; which is demonstrative evidence that the licentiousness of those papers is destitute of credit.

Whoever has made observation on the characters of nations will find it generally true that the manners of a nation, or of a party, can be better ascertained from the character of its press than from any other public circumstance. If its press is licentious, its manners are not good. Nobody believes a common liar or a common defamer.

Nothing is more common with printers, especially of newspapers, than the continual cry of the *Liberty of the Press*, as if because they are printers they are to have more privileges than other people. As the term *Liberty of the Press* is adopted in this country without being understood, I will state the origin of it and show what it means. The term comes from England, and the case was as follows:

Prior to what is in England called *the Revolution*, which was in 1688, no work could be published in that country without first obtaining the permission of an officer appointed by the Government for inspecting works intended for publication. The same was the case in France, except that in France there were

forty who were called *Censors,* and in England there was but one, called Imprimateur.

At the Revolution, the office of Imprimateur was abolished, and as works could then be published without first obtaining the permission of the government officer, the press was, in consequence of that abolition, said to be free, and it was from this circumstance that the term *Liberty of the Press* arose. The press, which is a tongue to the eye, was then put exactly in the case of the human tongue. A man does not ask liberty beforehand to say something he has a mind to say, but he becomes answerable afterwards for the atrocities he may utter.

In like manner, if a man makes the press utter atrocious things he becomes as answerable for them as if he had uttered them by word of mouth. Mr. Jefferson has said in his inaugural speech, that *"error of opinion might be tolerated, when reason was left free to combat it."* This is sound philosophy in cases of error. But there is a difference between error and licentiousness.

Some lawyers in defending their clients (for the generality of lawyers, like Swiss soldiers, will fight on either side), have often given their opinion of what they defined the liberty of the press to be. One said it was this, another said it was that, and so on, ac-

cording to the case they were pleading. Now these men ought to have known that the term *liberty of the press* arose from a FACT, the abolition of the office of Imprimateur, and that opinion has nothing to do in the case. The term refers to the fact of printing *free from prior restraint,* and not at all to the matter printed, whether good or bad. The public at large —or in case of prosecution, a jury of the country— will be judges of the matter.

THOMAS PAINE.

October 19, 1806.

THE WILL OF THOMAS PAINE

The People of the State of New York, by the Grace of God, Free and Independent, to all to whom these presents shall come, or may concern, SEND GREETING:

KNOW YE, That the annexed is a true copy of the will of THOMAS PAINE, deceased, as recorded in the office of the surrogate, in and for the city and county of New York. In testimony whereof, we have caused the seal of office of our said surrogate to be hereunto affixed. Witness, Silvanus Miller, Esq., surrogate of said county, at the city of New York, the twelfth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and of our independence the thirty-fourth.

SILVANUS MILLER.

TOWARDS the latter part of January, 1809, Paine was very feeble. On the eighteenth of that month he wrote and signed this, his last, Will and Testament, in which he reaffirms his theistic faith. In April he was removed from a house on Herring Street (afterward 293 Bleecker Street) New York, to a house on the spot now occupied by 59 Grove Street. There he died at eight o'clock on the morning of June 8, 1809, the year in which Lincoln and Darwin were born.

Shortly before he expired, two clergymen were admitted into the room and questioned Paine about his opinions. He responded, "Let me alone; good morning!"

Madame Bonneville, who, with her children, is mentioned in the Will as the principal beneficiary, asked Paine if he was satisfied with the treatment he had received in her house (the Grove Street address), and he said, "Oh, yes." These were the last words of Thomas Paine.

THE WILL

THE last Will and Testament of me, the subscriber, Thomas Paine, reposing confidence in my Creator, God, and in no other being, for I know of no other, nor believe in any other. I, Thomas Paine, of the State of New York, author of the work entitled "Common Sense," written in Philadelphia, in 1775, and published in that city the beginning of January, 1776, which awaked America to a declaration of independence on the fourth of July following, which was as fast as the work could spread through such an extensive country; author also of the several numbers of the "American Crisis," thirteen in all; published occasionally during the progress of the Revolutionary War—the last is on the peace; author also of "Rights of Man," parts the first and second, written and published in London, in 1791 and 1792; author also of a work on religion, "Age of Reason," parts the first and second—N. B. I have a third part by me in manuscript, and an answer to the Bishop of Llandaff; author also of a work, lately published, entitled "Examination of the Passages in the New Testament, Quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and showing there are no Prophecies of any such Person"; author also of several other

works not here enumerated, "Dissertations on First Principles of Government—Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance—Agrarian Justice, etc., etc., make this my last will and testament, that is to say:

I give and bequeath to my executors hereinafter appointed, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, thirty shares I hold in the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, which cost me fourteen hundred and seventy dollars, they are worth now upwards of fifteen hundred dollars, and all my movable effects, and also the money that may be in my trunk or elsewhere at the time of my decease, paying thereout the expenses of my funeral, IN TRUST as to the said shares, movables, and money, for Margaret Brazier Bonneville, wife of Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, for her own sole and separate use, and at her own disposal, notwithstanding her coverture.

As to my farm in New Rochelle, I give, devise, and bequeath the same to my said executors, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, and to the survivor of them, his heirs and assigns forever, IN TRUST nevertheless, to sell and dispose of the north side thereof, now in the occupation of Andrew A. Dean, beginning at the west end of the orchard, and running in a line with the land sold to —— Coles, to

the end of the farm, and to apply the money arising from such sale as hereinafter directed.

I give to my friends Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counselor at law, late of Ireland, two hundred dollars each, and one hundred dollars to Mrs. Palmer, widow of Elihu Palmer, late of New York, to be paid out of the money arising from said sale; and I give the remainder of the money arising from that sale, one-half thereof to Clio Rickman, of High or Upper Mary-le-Bone Street, London, and the other half to Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, husband of Margaret B. Bonneville, aforesaid: and as to the South part of the said farm, containing upwards of one hundred acres, in trust to rent out the same, or otherwise put it to profit, as shall be found most advisable, and to pay the rents and profits thereof to the said Margaret B. Bonneville, in trust for her children, Benjamin Bonneville, and Thomas Bonneville, their education and maintenance, until they come to the age of twenty-one years, in order that she may bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God, and the practise of morality; the rent of the land, or the interest of the money for which it may be sold, as hereinafter mentioned, to be employed in their education.

And after the youngest of the said children shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, in further trust to convey the same to the said children, share and share alike, in fee simple. But if it shall be thought advisable by my executors and executrix, or the survivors of them, at any time before the youngest of the said children shall come of age, to sell and dispose of the said south side of the said farm, in that case I hereby authorize and empower my said executors to sell and dispose of the same, and I direct that the money arising from such sale be put into stock, either in the United States Bank stock, or New York Phœnix Insurance Company stock, the interest or dividends thereof to be applied as is already directed for the education and maintenance of the said children, and the principal to be transferred to the said children, or the survivor of them, on his or their coming of age.

I know not if the Society of people called Quakers, admit a person to be buried in their burying ground, who does not belong to their Society, but if they do, or will admit me, I would prefer being buried there; my father belonged to that profession, and I was partly brought up in it. But if it is not consistent with their rules to do this, I desire to be buried on my own farm at New Rochelle.

The place where I am to be buried, to be a square of twelve feet, to be enclosed with rows of trees, and a stone or post and rail fence, with a headstone with my name and age engraved upon it, author of "Common Sense." I nominate, constitute, and appoint Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counselor at law, late of Ireland, and Margaret B. Bonneville, executors and executrix to this my last will and testament, requesting the said Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, that they will give what assistance they conveniently can to Mrs. Bonneville, and see that the children be well brought up. Thus placing confidence in their friendship, I herewith take my final leave of them and of the world.

I have lived an honest and useful life to mankind; my time has been spent in doing good, and I die in perfect composure and resignation to the will of my Creator, God. Dated the eighteenth day of January, in the year one thousand eight hundred and nine; and I have also signed my name to the other sheet of this will, in testimony of its being a part thereof.

THOMAS PAINE.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the testator, in our presence, who, at his request, and in

the presence of each other, have set our names as witnesses thereto, the words "published and declared" first interlined.

WM. KEESE,
JAMES ANGEVINE,
CORNELIUS RYDER.

APPENDIX

SONGS AND RHYMES

THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE

THIS song was written directly after the news reached England that General James Wolfe had been killed in battle with the French forces under Montcalm at Quebec, in 1759. It is said to have been sung at the Headstrong Club, of which Paine was a member, in Lewes, England; and is the earliest composition of his which has been preserved. In several editions it is erroneously said to have been printed in "The Gentleman's Magazine." As a fact, it first appeared in the "Pennsylvania Magazine," of which Paine was editor, in March, 1775, with music. It greatly stimulated the circulation of the magazine.

IN a mouldering cave where the wretched retreat,
Britannia sat wasted with care;
She mourned for her Wolfe, and exclaim'd against fate
And gave herself up to despair.
The walls of her cell she had sculptured around
With the feats of her favorite son;
And even the dust, as it lay on the ground,
Was engraved with the deeds he had done.

The sire of the Gods, from his crystalline throne,
Beheld the disconsolate dame,
And moved with her tears, he sent Mercury down,
And these were the tidings that came:
"Britannia forbear, not a sigh nor a tear
For thy Wolfe so deservedly loved,
Your tears shall be changed into triumphs of joy,
For thy Wolfe is not dead but removed.

"The sons of the East, the proud giants of old.
Have crept from their darksome abodes,
And this is the news as in Heaven it was told,
They were marching to war with the Gods;
A Council was held in the chambers of Jove,
And this was their final decree,
That Wolfe should be called to the armies above,
And the charge was intrusted to me.

"To the plains of Quebec with the orders I flew,
He begg'd for a moment's delay;
He cry'd 'Oh! forbear, let me victory hear,
And then thy command I'll obey.'
With a darksome thick film I encompass'd his eyes,
And bore him away in an urn,
Lest the fondness he bore to his own native shore,
Should induce him again to return."

FARMER SHORT'S DOG PORTER: A TALE

IN a foreword to these lines, first published in the "Pennsylvania Magazine," Philadelphia, July, 1775, the author states that "The following story, ridiculous as it is, is a fact. A farmer at New Shoreham, near Brighthelmstone, in England, having voted at an election for a Member of Parliament, contrary to the pleasure of three neighboring justices, they took revenge upon his dog, which they caused to be hung, for starting a hare upon the road. The piece has been very little seen, never published, nor any copies taken." Like the Song on Wolfe, these humorous lines were written for the amusement of the Headstrong Club, at Lewes, England, where Paine lived until the autumn of 1774. Paine never collected his verses, of which these are some of the best specimens, for publication.

THREE Justices (so says my tale)
Once met upon the public weal.
For learning, law, and parts profound,
Their fame was spread the county round;
Each by his wondrous art could tell
Of things as strange as Sydrophel;
Or by the help of sturdy ale,
So cleverly could tell a tale,
That half the gaping standers by
Would laugh aloud. The rest would cry.
Or by the help of nobler wine,
Would knotty points so nice define,
That in an instant right was wrong,
Yet did not hold that station long,
For while they talk'd of wrong and right,
The question vanish'd out of sight.

Each knew by practise where to turn
To every powerful page in Burn,
And could by help of note and book
Talk law like Littleton and Coke.
Each knew by instinct when and where
A farmer caught or kill'd a hare;
Could tell if any man had got
One hundred pounds per ann. or not;
Or what was greater, could divine
If it was only ninety-nine.
For when the hundred wanted one,
They took away the owner's gun.
Knew by the leering of an eye
If girls had lost their chastity,
And if they had not—would divine
Some way to make their virtue shine.

These learned brothers being assembled,
(At which the county feared and trembled),
A warrant sent to bring before 'em,
One Farmer Short, who dwelt at Shoreham,
Upon a great and heavy charge,
Which we shall here relate at large,
That those who were not there may read,
In after days, the mighty deed:

Viz.

"That he, the 'foresaid Farmer Short,
Being by the devil moved, had not
One hundred pounds per annum got;
That having not (in form likewise)

The fear of God before his eyes,
By force and arms did keep and cherish,
Within the aforesaid town and parish,
Against the statute so provided,
A dog. And there the dog abided.
That he, this dog, did then and there
Pursue, and take, and kill a hare;
Which treason was, or some such thing,
Against our SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING."

The constable was bid to jog,
And bring the farmer—not the dog.

But fortune, whose perpetual wheel
Grinds disappointment sharp as steel,
On purpose to attack the pride
Of those who over others ride,
So nicely brought the matter round,
That Farmer Short could not be found,
Which plunged the bench in so much doubt
They knew not what to go about.
But after pondering pro and con,
And mighty reasonings thereupon,
They found, on opening of the laws,
That he, the dog aforesaid, was
By being privy to the fact,
Within the meaning of the act,
And since the master had withdrawn,
And was the Lord knows whither gone,
They judged it right, and good in law,

That he, the dog, should answer for
Such crimes as they by proof could show,
Were acted by himself and Co.
The constable again was sent,
To bring the dog; or dread the event.

Poor Porter, right before the door,
Was guarding of his master's store;
And as the constable approach'd him,
He caught him by the leg and broach'd him;
Poor Porter thought (if dogs can think)
He came to steal his master's chink.
The man, by virtue of his staff,
Bid people help; not stand and laugh;
On which a mighty rout began;
Some blamed the dog, and some the man.
Some said he had no business there,
Some said he had business everywhere.

At length the constable prevail'd,
And those who would not help were jail'd;
And taking Porter by the collar,
Commanded all the guards to follow.

The justices received the felon,
With greater form than I can tell on,
And quitting now their wine and punch,
Began upon him all at once.

At length a curious quibble rose,
How far the law could interpose,
For it was proved, and rightly too,
That he, the dog, did not pursue
The hare, with any ill intent,
But only followed by the scent;
And she, the hare, by running hard,
Thro' hedge and ditch, without regard,
Plunged in a pond, and there was drown'd,
And by a neighboring justice found;
Wherefore, though he the hare annoy'd,
It can't be said that he destroy'd;
It even can't be proved he beat her,
And "to destroy" must mean "to eat her."

Did you e'er see a gamester struck,
With all the symptoms of ill luck?
Or mark the visage which appears,
When even Hope herself despairs?
So look'd the bench, and every brother
Sad pictures drew of one another;
Till one more learned than the rest
Rose up, and thus the court address'd:

"Why, Gentlemen, I'll tell ye how,
Ye may clear up this matter now,
For I am of opinion strong
The dog deserves, and should be hung.
I'll prove it by as plain a case,
As is the nose upon your face.

"Now if, suppose, a man, or so,
Should be obliged, or not, to go
About, or not about, a case,
To this, or that, or t' other place!
And if another man, for fun,
Should fire a pistol (viz.) a gun,
And he, the first, by knowing not
That he, the second man, had shot,
Should undesign'dly meet the bullet,
Against the throat (in Greek) the gullet,
And get such mischief by the hit
As should unsense him of his wit,
And if that, after that he died,
D'ye think the other may n't be tried?
Most sure he must, and hang'd, because
He fired his gun against the laws:
For 't is a case most clear and plain,
Had A not shot, B had not been slain:
So had the dog not chased the hare,
She never had been drown'd—that's clear."

This logic, rhetoric, and wit,
So nicely did the matter hit,
That Porter, though unheard, was cast,
And in a halter breathed his last.
The justices adjourned to dine,
And whet their logic up with wine.

THE SNOWDROP AND THE CRITIC

IN introducing the "Pennsylvania Magazine" to the public, in January, 1775, it was said that "like the snow-drop it comes forth in a barren season, and contents itself with foretelling that choicer flowers are preparing to appear." Paine was the editor, and wrote both the introduction and this anonymous metrical response addressed to the editor, with this note: "I have given your very modest 'Snowdrop' what, I think, Shakespeare calls 'a local habitation and a name'; that is, I have made a poet of him, and have sent him to take possession of a page in your next magazine; here he comes, disputing with a critic about the propriety of a prologue."

Enter CRITIC *and* SNOW DROP.

CRITIC.

PROLOGUES to magazines!—the man is mad,
No magazine a prologue ever had;
But let us hear what new and mighty things
Your wonder working magic fancy brings.

SNOW DROP.

Bit by the muse in an unlucky hour,
I've left myself at home, and turn'd a flower,
And thus disguised came forth to tell my tale,
A plain white snow drop gathered from the vale:
I come to sing that summer is at hand,
The summer time of wit you'll understand;
And that this garden of our magazine
Will soon exhibit such a pleasing scene,

That even critics shall admire the show
If their good grace will give us time to grow;
Beneath the surface of the parent earth
We've various seeds just struggling into birth;
Plants, fruits, and flowers, and all the smiling race,
That can the orchard or the garden grace;
Our numbers, Sir, so fast and endless are,
That when in full complexion we appear,
Each eye, each hand, shall pluck what suits its taste,
And every palate shall enjoy a feast;
The rose and lily shall address the fair,
And whisper sweetly out, "My dears, take care";
With sterling worth, the plant of sense shall rise
And teach the curious to philosophize;
The keen eyed wit shall claim the scented briar,
And sober cits the solid grain admire;
While generous juices sparkling from the vine,
Shall warm the audience until they cry—divine!
And when the scenes of one gay month are o'er,
Shall clap their hands, and shout—encore, encore!

CRITIC.

All this is mighty fine! but prithee, when
The frost returns, how fight you then your men?

SNOW DROP.

I'll tell you, Sir: we'll garnish out the scenes
With stately rows of hardy evergreens,

Trees that will bear the frost, and deck their tops
With everlasting flowers, like diamond drops;
We'll draw, and paint, and carve, with so much skill,
That wondering wits shall cry—diviner still!

CRITIC.

Better, and better, yet! but now suppose,
Some critic wight, in mighty verse or prose,
Should draw his gray goose weapon, dipt in gall,
And mow ye down, plants, flowers, trees, and all.

SNOW DROP.

Why, then we'll die like flowers of sweet perfume,
And yield a fragrance even in the tomb!

LIBERTY TREE

A Song, written early in the American Revolution

Tune—The gods of Greece.

IN a chariot of light, from the regions of day,
The Goddess of Liberty came,
Ten thousand celestials directed her way,
And hither conducted the dame.
A fair budding branch from the gardens above,
Where millions with millions agree,
She brought in her hand as a pledge of her love,
And the plant she named Liberty Tree.

The celestial exotic stuck deep in the ground,
Like a native it flourished and bore;
The fame of its fruit drew the nations around,
To seek out this peaceable shore.
Unmindful of names or distinctions they came,
For freemen like brothers agree;
With one spirit endued, they one friendship pursued,
And their temple was Liberty Tree.

Beneath this fair tree, like the patriarchs of old,
Their bread in contentment they ate,
Unvexed with the troubles of silver or gold,
The cares of the grand and the great.
With timber and tar they Old England supplied,
And supported her power on the sea:

Her battles they fought, without getting a groat,
For the honor of Liberty Tree.

But hear, O ye swains ('tis a tale most profane),
How all the tyrannical powers,
Kings, Commons, and Lords, are uniting amain
To cut down this guardian of ours.
From the East to the West blow the trumpet to arms,
Thro' the land let the sound of it flee:
Let the far and the near all unite with a cheer,
In defense of our Liberty Tree.

AN ADDRESS TO LORD HOWE

SIR WILLIAM HOWE was the British commander to whom Paine also addressed his Crisis No. II, January 13, 1777. He had commanded the British "redcoats" at Bunker Hill, had been forced by Washington to evacuate Boston, and in retaliation had won the Battle of Long Island, defeated Washington at White Plains, captured Forts Washington and Lee and won the Battle of Brandywine.

THE rain pours down, the city looks forlorn,
And gloomy subjects suit the howling morn;
Close by my fire, with door and window fast,
And safely shelter'd from the driving blast,
To gayer thoughts I bid a day's adieu,
To spend a scene of solitude with you.

So oft has black revenge engross'd the care
Of all the leisure hours man finds to spare;
So oft has guilt, in all her thousand dens,
Call'd for the vengeance of chastising pens;
That while I fain would ease my heart on you,
No thought is left untold, no passion new.

From flight to flight the mental path appears,
Worn with the steps of near six thousand years,
And fill'd throughout with every scene of pain,
From George the murderer down to murderous Cain
Alike in cruelty, alike in hate,
In guilt alike, but more alike in fate,
Curséd supremely for the blood they drew,
Each from the rising world, while each was new.

Go, man of blood! true likeness of the first,
And strew your blasted head with homely dust:
In ashes sit—in wretched sackcloth weep,
And with unpitied sorrows cease to sleep.
Go haunt the tombs, and single out the place
Where earth itself shall suffer a disgrace.
Go spell the letters on some moldering urn,
And ask if he who sleeps there can return.

Go count the numbers that in silence lie,
And learn by study what it is to die;
For sure your heart, if any heart you own,
Conceits that man expires without a groan;
That he who lives receives from you a grace,
Or death is nothing but a change of place:
That peace is dull, that joy from sorrow springs
And war the most desirable of things.
Else why these scenes that wound the feeling mind,
This sport of death—this cockpit of mankind!
Why sobs the widow in perpetual pain?
Why cries the orphan, "Oh! my father's slain!"
Why hangs the sire his paralytic head,
And nods with manly grief—"My son is dead!"
Why drops the tear from off the sister's cheek,
And sweetly tells the misery she would speak?
Or why in sorrow sunk, does pensive John
To all the neighbors tell, "Poor master's gone!"

Oh! could I paint the passion that I feel,
Or point a horror that would wound like steel,

To thy unfeeling, unrelenting mind,
I'd send destruction and relieve mankind.
You that are husbands, fathers, brothers, all
The tender names which kindred learn to call;
Yet like an image carved in massy stone,
You bear the shape, but sentiment have none;
Allied by dust and figure, not with mind,
You only herd, but live not with mankind,

Since then no hopes to civilize remain,
And mild philosophy has preached in vain,
One prayer is left, which dreads no proud reply,
That he who made you breathe will make you die.

HAIL GREAT REPUBLIC

Tune—Rule Britannia

THE date of this patriotic composition is not known precisely, but it was written after Paine returned to America in 1802, and probably before 1806. It is of ironical record that the author of this parody of "Rule Britannia" attempted to vote at his New Rochelle home in 1806 and "his vote was not admitted, on the pretence of his not being an American citizen." A comparison between the words of the British national anthem, written by the poet James Thomson in 1740, and those of Paine leads one to the conclusion that Paine was essentially a master of prose.

HAIL great Republic of the world,
Which rear'd her empire in the West,
Where fam'd Columbus' flag unfurl'd,
Gave tortured Europe scenes of rest;
Be thou forever great and free,
The land of Love and Liberty!

Beneath thy spreading, mantling vine,
Beside each flowery grove and spring,
And where thy lofty mountains shine,
May all thy sons and fair ones sing.
Be thou forever, etc.

From thee may hellish discord prowl,
With all her dark and hateful train;
And while thy mighty waters roll,
May heaven-descended concord reign.
Be thou forever, etc.

Where'er the Atlantic surges lave,
Or sea the human eye delights,
There may thy starry standard wave,
The constellation of thy rights!
Be thou forever, etc.

May ages as they rise proclaim
The glories of thy natal day;
And states from thy exalted name
Learn how to rule, and to obey.
Be thou forever, etc.

Let laureates make their birthdays known,
Or how war's thunderbolts are hurl'd;
'Tis ours the charter, ours alone,
To sing the birthday of a world!
Be thou forever great and free,
The land of Love and Liberty!

FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR, TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD

THIS composition was addressed to Lady Smyth, wife of Sir Robert Smyth, an English banker in Paris. While in the Luxembourg prison Paine received sympathetic letters from her signed anonymously "A Little Corner of the World." He responded, signing himself "The Castle in the Air," and in the course of time his correspondent made known her identity. To her he also wrote the letter on "Forgetfulness," which appears in Vol. II of these works.

IN the region of clouds, where the whirlwinds arise,
My castle of fancy was built;
The turrets reflected the blue from the skies,
And the windows with sunbeams were gilt.

The rainbow sometimes, in its beautiful state,
Enamel'd the mansion around;
And the figures that fancy in clouds can create,
Supplied me with gardens and ground.

I had grottoes, and fountains, and orange tree groves,
I had all that enchantment has told;
I had sweet shady walks, for the Gods and their Loves,
I had mountains of coral and gold.

But a storm that I felt not, had risen and roll'd,
While wrapp'd in a slumber I lay;
And when I look'd out in the morning, behold
My Castle was carried away.

It pass'd over rivers, and valleys, and groves,
The world it was all in my view;
I thought of my friends, of their fates, of their loves,
And often, full often of YOU.

At length it came over a beautiful scene,
That nature in silence had made;
The place was but small, but 'twas sweetly serene
And checkered with sunshine and shade.

I gazed and I envied with painful goodwill,
And grew tired of my seat in the air;
When all of a sudden my Castle stood still,
As if some attraction was there.

Like a lark from the sky it came fluttering down,
And placed me exactly in view,
When whom should I meet in this charming retreat,
This corner of calmness, but YOU.

Delighted to find you in honor and ease,
I felt no more sorrow, nor pain;
But the wind coming fair, I ascended the breeze,
And went back with my Castle again.

TO SIR ROBERT SMYTH

AFTER his release from the Luxembourg prison, Paine cultivated the friendship of Sir Robert Smyth, the English banker in Paris, whose wife had written him a number of anonymous letters of sympathy meant to beguile the weary and fearful hours of a prisoner whom she had little expectation of ever meeting again. Before his imprisonment they had met casually. In a note accompanying these verses, dated Paris, 1800, Paine says, "As I will not attempt to rival your witty description of love (in which you say, 'Love is like paper, with a fool it is wit, with a wit it is folly'), I will retreat to sentiment and try if I can match you there; and that I may start with a fair chance, I will begin with your own question."

WHAT IS LOVE?

'TIS that delightsome transport we can feel
Which painters cannot paint, nor words reveal,
Nor any art we know of can conceal.

Canst thou describe the sunbeams to the blind,
Or make him feel a shadow with his mind?
So neither can we by description show
This first of all felicities below.

When happy Love pours magic o'er the soul,
And all our thoughts in sweet delirium roll;
When contemplation spreads her rainbow wings,
And every flutter some new rapture brings;
How sweetly then our moments glide away,
And dreams repeat the raptures of the day;
We live in ecstasy, to all things kind,
For love can teach a moral to the mind.

But are there not some other marks that prove,
What is this wonder of the soul, call'd love?
O yes there are, but of a different kind,
The dreadful horrors of a dismal mind:
Some jealous fury throws her poison'd dart,
And rends in pieces the distracted heart.

When love's a tyrant, and the soul a slave,
No hope remains to thought, but in the grave;
In that dark den it sees an end to grief,
And what was once its dread becomes relief.

What are the iron chains that hands have wrought?
The hardest chain to break is made of thought.
Think well of this, ye lovers, and be kind,
Nor play with torture on a tortured mind.

CONTENTMENT; OR, IF YOU PLEASE, CONFESSION

PAINE inscribed this poetic epistle to the wife of his friend Joel Barlow, the American poet, who was living in Paris at the time, 1796, in a note reading: "To Mrs. Barlow, on her pleasantly telling the author that, after writing against the superstition of the Scripture religion, he was setting up a religion capable of more bigotry and enthusiasm, and more dangerous to its votaries—that of making a religion of Love." The original manuscript is in possession of The Thomas Paine National Historical Association.

O COULD we always live and love,
And always be sincere,
I would not wish for heaven above,
My heaven would be here.

Though many countries I have seen,
And more may chance to see,
My Little Corner of the World
Is half the world to me;

The other half, as you may guess,
America contains;
And thus, between them, I possess
The whole world for my pains.

I'm then contented with my lot,
I can no happier be;
For neither world I'm sure has got
So rich a man as me.

Then send no fiery chariot down
To take me off from hence,
But leave me on my heavenly ground—
This prayer is *common-sense.*

Let others choose another plan,
I mean no fault to find;
The true theology of man
Is *happiness of mind.*

CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE

With Remarks on the Qualifications of Officers, and on the Numerous Evils Arising to the Revenue, from the Insufficiency of the Present Salary: Humbly Addressed to the Members of Both Houses of Parliament

The Introduction

THIS is Paine's earliest known prose composition. It was written at Lewes, England, in 1772, when the author was thirty-five years old. Five years earlier he had entered the excise service, and "Oldys" (George Chalmers) records, "He had risen by superior energy to be a chief among the excisemen." Needing a spokesman to voice an appeal to Parliament for a salary increase, they chose Paine to prepare the accompanying document, which was printed, but not published until 1793.

As a prose composition, it is a model of force and clarity. Paine was dismissed from the service in 1774 "for being absent without leave." William Cobbett, the English political writer, goes so far as to hold that this dismissal of Paine cost England her American colonies.

AS a design among the excise officers throughout the kingdom is on foot for a humble application to Parliament next session, to have the state of their salaries taken into consideration; it has been judged not only expedient, but highly necessary, to present a state of their case, previous to the presentation of their petition.

There are some cases so singularly reasonable, that the more they are considered, the more weight they obtain. It is a strong evidence both of simplicity and honest confidence, when petitioners in any case ground their hopes of relief on having their case fully and perfectly known and understood.

Simple as this subject may appear at first, it is a matter, in my humble opinion, not unworthy a Parliamentary attention. 'Tis a subject interwoven with a variety of reasons from different causes. New matter will arise on every thought. *If the poverty of the officers of excise, if the temptations arising from their poverty, if the qualifications of persons to be admitted into employment, if the security of the revenue itself,* are matters of any weight, then I am conscious that my voluntary services in this business, will produce some good effect or other, either to the better security of the revenue, the relief of the officers, or both.

The State of the Salary of the Officers of Excise

When a year's salary is mentioned in the gross, it acquires a degree of consequence from its *sound,* which it would not have if separated into daily payments, and if the charges attending the receiving and other unavoidable expenses were considered with it. Fifty pounds a year, and one shilling and ninepence farthing a day, carry as different degrees of significancy with them, as My Lord's steward, and the steward's laborer; and yet an outride officer in the excise, under the name of fifty pounds a year, receives for himself no more than one shilling and ninepence farthing a day.

After tax, charity and sitting expenses are deducted there remains very little more than forty-six pounds; and the expenses of horsekeeping in many places cannot be

brought under fourteen pounds a year, besides the purchase at first, and the hazard of life, which reduces it to thirty-two pounds *per annum*, or one shilling and ninepence farthing per day.

I have spoken more particularly of the outrides, as they are by far the most numerous, being in proportion to the footwalks as eight is to five throughout the kingdom. Yet in the latter the same misfortunes exist; the channel of them only is altered. The excessive dearness of house-rent, the great burden of rates and taxes, and the excessive price of all necessaries of life, in cities and large trading towns, nearly counter-balance the expenses of horse-keeping. Every office has its stages of promotions, but the pecuniary advantages arising from a foot-walk are so inconsiderable, and the loss of disposing of effects, or the charges of removing them to any considerable distance so great, that many out-ride officers with a family remain as they are, from an inability to bear the loss, or support the expense.

The officers resident in the cities of *London* and *Westminster*, are exempt from the particular disadvantages of removals. This seems to be the only circumstance which they enjoy superior to their country brethren. In every other respect they lay under the same hardships, and suffer the same distresses.

There are no perquisites or advantages in the least annexed to the employment. A few officers who are stationed along the coast, may sometimes have the good fortune to fall in with a seizure of contraband goods, and

yet, that frequently at the hazard of their lives: but the inland officers can have no such opportunities. Besides, the surveying duty in the excise is so continual that without remissness from the real business itself there is no time to seek after them. With the officers of the customs it is quite otherwise; their whole time and care is appropriated to that service, and their profits are in proportion to their vigilance.

If the increase of money in the kingdom is one cause of the high price of provisions, the case of the excise officers is peculiarly pitiable. No increase comes to them —they are shut out from the general blessing—they behold it like a map of *Peru.* The answer of Abraham to Dives is somewhat applicable to them, *"There is a great gulf fixed."*

To the wealthy and humane it is a matter worthy of concern that their affluence should become the misfortune of others. Were the money in the kingdom to be increased double the salary would in value be reduced one-half. Every step upward is a step downward with them. Not to be partakers of the increase would be a little hard, but to be sufferers by it exceedingly so. The mechanic and the laborer may in a great measure ward off the distress by raising the price of their manufactures or their work, but the situation of the officers admits of no such relief.

Another consideration in their behalf (and which is peculiar to the excise) is that, as the law of their office removes them far from all their natural friends and

relations, it consequently prevents those occasional assistance from them, which are serviceably felt in a family, and which even the poorest among the poor enjoys. Most poor mechanics, or even common laborers, have some relations or friends, who, either out of benevolence or pride, keep their children from nakedness, supply them occasionally with perhaps half a hog, a load of wood, a chaldron of coals, or something or other which abates the severity of their distress; and yet those men thus relieved will frequently earn more than the daily pay of an excise officer.

Perhaps an officer will appear more reputable with the same pay than a mechanic or laborer. The difference arises from sentiment, not circumstances. A something like reputable pride makes all the distinction, and the thinking part of mankind well knows that none suffers so much as they who endeavor to conceal their necessities.

The frequent removals which unavoidably happen in the excise are attended with such an expense, especially where there is a family, as few officers are able to support. About two years ago, an officer with a family, under orders for removing, and in rather embarrassed circumstances, made his application to me, and from a conviction of his distress I advanced a small sum to enable him to proceed. He ingenuously declared, that without the assistance of some friend, he should be driven to do injustice to his creditors, and compelled to desert the duty of his office. He has since honestly paid me, and does as well as the narrowness of such circumstances can admit of.

There is one general allowed truth which will always operate in their favor, which is, that no set of men under His Majesty earn their salary with any comparison of labor and fatigue with that of the officers of excise. The station may rather be called a seat of constant work than either a place or an employment. Even in the different departments of the general revenue they are unequaled in the burden of business; a riding officer's place in the customs, whose salary is sixty pounds a year, is *ease* to theirs; and the work in the window-light duty, compared with the excise, is lightness itself; yet their salary is subject to no tax, they receive forty-nine pounds twelve shillings and sixpence, without deduction.

The inconveniences which affect an excise officer are almost endless; even the land-tax assessment upon their salaries, which though the Government pays, falls often with hardship upon them. The place of their residence, on account of the land tax, has in many instances, created frequent contentions between parishes, in which the officer, though the innocent and unconcerned cause of the quarrel, has been the greater sufferer.

To point out particularly the impossibility of an excise officer supporting himself and family, with any proper degree of credit and reputation, on so scanty a pittance, is altogether unnecessary. The times, the voice of general want, is proof itself. Where facts are sufficient arguments are useless; and the hints which I have produced are such as affect the officers of excise *differently* to any other set of men. A single man may barely live; but as it is not the

design of the Legislature or the honorable Board of Excise, to impose a state of celibacy on them, the condition of much the greater part is truly wretched and pitiable.

Perhaps it may be said, why do the excise officers complain; they are not pressed into the service, and may relinquish it when they please; if they can mend themselves, why don't they? Alas! what a mockery of pity would it be to give such an answer to an honest, faithful old officer in the excise, who had spent the prime of his life in the service, and was become unfit for anything else. The time limited for an admission into an excise employment, is between twenty-one and thirty years of age—the very flower of life. Every other hope and consideration is then given up, and the chance of establishing themselves in any other business becomes in a few years not only lost to them, but they become lost to it. "There is a tide in the affairs of men," which if embraced, leads on to fortune—*that neglected,* all beyond is misery or want.

When we consider how few in the excise arrive at any comfortable eminence, and the date of life when such promotions only can happen, the great hazard there is of ill rather than good fortune in the attempt, and that all the years antecedent to that is a state of mere existence, wherein they are shut out from the common chance of success in any other way: a reply like that can be only a derision of their wants. 'Tis almost impossible after any long continuance in the excise that they *can* live any other way. Such as are of trades would have their trade to learn over again; and people would have but little opinion of their

abilities in any calling who had been ten, fifteen, or twenty years absent from it. Every year's experience gained in the excise is a year's experience lost in trade; and by the time they become wise officers they become foolish workmen.

Were the reasons for augmenting the salary grounded only on the charitableness of so doing, they would have great weight with the compassionate. But there are auxiliaries of such a powerful cast that in the opinion of policy they obtain the rank of originals. The first is truly the case of the officers, but this is rather the case of the revenue.

The distresses in the excise are so generally known that numbers of gentlemen, and other inhabitants in places where officers are resident, have generously and humanely recommended their case to the members of the Honorable House of Commons: and numbers of traders of opulence and reputation, well knowing that the poverty of an officer may subject him to the fraudulent designs of some selfish persons under his survey, to the great injury of the fair trader, and trade in general, have, from principles both of generosity and justice, joined in the same recommendation.

Thoughts on the Corruption of Principles, and on the Numerous Evils Arising to the Revenue, from the Too Great Poverty of the Officers of Excise

It has always been the wisdom of government to consider the situation and circumstances of persons in trust.

Why are large salaries given in many instances, but to proportion it to the trust, to set men above temptation, and to make it even literally worth their while to be honest? The salaries of the judges have been augmented, and their places made independent even on the Crown itself, for the above wise purposes.

Certainly there can be nothing unreasonable in supposing there is such an instinct as frailty among the officers of excise, in common with the rest of mankind; and that the most effectual method to keep men honest is to enable them to live so. The tenderness of conscience is too often overmatched by the sharpness of want; and principle, like chastity, yields with just reluctance enough to excuse itself.

There is a powerful rhetoric in necessity, which exceeds even a *Dunning* or a *Wedderburne*. No argument can satisfy the feelings of hunger, or abate the edge of appetite. Nothing tends to a greater corruption of manners and principles than a too great distress of circumstances; and the corruption is of that kind that it spreads a plaster for itself: like a viper it carries a cure, though a false one, for its own poison. *Agur*, without any alternative, has made dishonesty the immediate consequence of poverty. "Lest I be poor and steal." A very little degree of that dangerous kind of philosophy, which is the almost certain effect of involuntary poverty, will teach men to believe that to starve is more criminal than to steal, by as much as every species of self-murder exceeds every other crime; that true honesty is sentimental, and the practise of it dependent upon circumstances.

If the gay find it difficult to resist the allurements of pleasure, the great the temptation of ambition, or the miser the acquisition of wealth, how much stronger are the provocations of want and poverty? The excitements to pleasure, grandeur or riches, are mere "shadows of a shade" compared to the irresistible necessities of nature. Not to be led into temptation is the prayer of Divinity itself; and to guard against, or rather to prevent, such insnaring situations is one of the greatest heights of human prudence: in private life it is partly religious; and in a revenue sense it is truly political.

The rich, in ease and affluence, may think I have drawn an unnatural portrait; but could they descend to the cold regions of want, the circle of polar poverty, they would find their opinions changing with the climate. There are habits of thinking peculiar to different conditions, and to find them out is truly to study mankind.

That the situation of an excise officer is of this dangerous kind, must be allowed by every one who will consider the trust unavoidably reposed in him, and compare the narrowness of his circumstances with the hardship of the times. If the salary was judged competent a hundred years ago, it cannot be so now. Should it be advanced that if the present set of officers are dissatisfied with the salary enough may be procured not only for the present salary, but for less, the answer is extremely easy. The question needs only be put; it destroys itself. Were two or three thousand men to offer to execute the office without any salary, would the Government accept them? No.

Were the same number to offer the same service for a salary less than can possibly support them, would the Government accept them? Certainly no; for while nature, in spite of law or religion, makes it a ruling principle not to starve, the event would be this, that if they could not live on the salary they would discretionarily live out of the duty.

Query, whether poverty has not too great an influence now? Were the employment a place of direct labor, and not of trust, then frugality in the salary would be sound policy: but when it is considered that the greatest single branch of the revenue, a duty amounting to near five millions sterling, is annually charged by a set of men, most of whom are wanting even the common necessaries of life, the thought must, to every friend to honesty, to every person concerned in the management of the public money, be strong and striking. Poor and in power are powerful temptations; I call it power, because they have it in their power to defraud. The trust unavoidably reposed in an excise officer is so great that it would be an act of wisdom, and perhaps of interest, to secure him from the temptations of downright poverty. To relieve their wants would be charity, but to secure the revenue by so doing would be prudence.

Scarce a week passes at the office but some detections are made of fraudulent and collusive proceedings. The poverty of the officers is the fairest bait for a designing trader that can possibly be; such introduce themselves to the officer under the common plea of the insufficiency of

the salary. Every considerate mind must allow that poverty and opportunity corrupt many an honest man. I am not at all surprised that so many opulent and reputable traders have recommended the case of the officers to the good favor of their representatives. They are sensible of the pinching circumstances of the officers, and of the injury to trade in general, from the advantages which are taken of them.

The welfare of the fair trader and the security of the revenue are so inseparably one, that their interest or injuries are alike. It is the opinion of such whose situation gives them a perfect knowledge in the matter that the revenue suffers more by the corruption of a few officers in a county than would make a handsome addition to the salary of the whole number in the same place.

I very lately knew an instance where it is evident, on comparison of the duty charged since, that the revenue suffered by one trade (and he not a very considerable one) upward of one hundred and sixty pounds *per annum* for several years; and yet the benefit to the officer was a mere trifle, in consideration of the trader's. Without doubt the officer would have thought himself much happier to have received the same addition another way. The bread of deceit is a bread of bitterness; but alas! how few in times of want and hardship are capable of thinking so: objects appear under new colors and in shapes not naturally their own; hunger sucks in the deception and necessity reconciles it to conscience.

The commissioners of excise strongly enjoin that no officer accept any treaty, gratuity or, in short, lay himself

under any kind of obligation to the traders under their survey: the wisdom of such an injunction is evident; but the practise of it, to a person surrounded with children and poverty, is scarcely possible; and such obligations, wherever they exist, must operate, directly or indirectly, to the injury of the revenue. Favors will naturally beget their likenesses, especially where the return is not at our own expense.

I have heard it remarked by a gentleman whose knowledge in excise business is indisputable that there are numbers of officers who are even afraid to look into an unentered room, lest they should give offense. Poverty and obligation tie up the hands of office and give a prejudicial bias to the mind.

There is another kind of evil, which, though it may never amount to what may be deemed criminality in law, yet it may amount to what is much worse in effect, and that is, *a constant and perpetual leakage in the revenue:* a sort of gratitude in the dark, a distant requital for such civilities as only the lowest poverty would accept, and which are a thousand *per cent.* above the value of the civility received. Yet there is no immediate collusion; the trader and officer are both safe; the design, if discovered, passes for error.

These, with numberless other evils, have all their origin in the poverty of the officers. Poverty, in defiance of principle, begets a degree of meanness that will stoop to almost anything. A thousand refinements of argument may be brought to prove that the practise of honesty will be still

the same, in the most trying and necessitous circumstances. He who never was an hungered may argue finely on the subjection of his appetite; and he who never was distressed, may harangue as beautifully on the power of principle. But poverty, like grief, has an incurable deafness, which never hears; the oration loses all its edge; and "*To be, or not to be*" becomes the only question.

There is a striking difference between dishonesty arising from want of food, and want of principle. The first is worthy of compassion, the other of punishment. Nature never produced a man who would starve in a well-stored larder, because the provisions were not his own: but he who robs it from luxury of appetite deserves a gibbet.

There is another evil which the poverty of the salary produces, and which nothing but an augmentation of it can remove; and that is negligence and indifference. These may not appear of such dark complexion as fraud and collusion, but their injuries to the revenue are the same. It is impossible that any office or business can be regarded as it ought, where this ruinous disposition exists, It requires no sort of argument to prove that the value set upon any place or employment will be in proportion to the value of it; and that diligence or negligence will arise from the same cause. The continual number of relinquishments and discharges always happening in the excise, are evident proofs of it.

Persons first coming into the excise form very different notions of it [compared] to what they have afterwards. The gay ideas of promotion soon expire. The continuance

of work, the strictness of the duty, and the poverty of the salary, soon beget negligence and indifference: the course continues for a while, the revenue suffers, and the officer is discharged: the vacancy is soon filled up, new ones arise to produce the same mischief and share the same fate.

What adds still more to the weight of this grievance is that this destructive disposition reigns most among such as are otherwise the most proper and qualified for the employment; such as are neither fit for the excise, or anything else, are glad to hold it by any means; but the revenue lies at as much hazard from their want of judgment, as from the others' want of diligence.

In private life, no man would trust the execution of any important concern to a servant who was careless whether he did it or not, and the same rule must hold good in a revenue sense. The commissioners may continue discharging every day, and the example will have no weight while the salary is an object so inconsiderable, and this disposition has such a general existence. Should it be advanced that if men will be careless of such bread as is in their possession they will still be the same were it better, I answer that, as the disposition I am speaking of it not the effect of natural idleness, but of dissatisfaction in point of profit, they would *not* continue the same.

A good servant will be careful of a good place, though very indifferent about a bad one. Besides, this spirit of indifference, should it procure a discharge, is no ways affecting to their circumstances. The easy transition of a qualified officer to a counting-house, or at least to a school-

master, at any time, as it naturally supports and backs his indifference about the excise, so it takes off all punishment from the order whenever it happens.

I have known numbers discharged from the excise who would have been a credit to their patrons and the employment, could they have found it worth their while to have attended to it. No man enters into excise with any higher expectations than a competent maintenance; but not to find even that, can produce anything but *Corruption, Collusion and Neglect.*

Remarks on the Qualifications of Officers

In employments where direct labor only is wanted, and trust quite out of the question, the service is merely animal or mechanical. In cutting a river, or forming a road, as there is no possibility of fraud, the merit of honesty is but of little weight. Health, strength and hardiness are the laborer's virtues. But where property depends on the trust, and lies at the discretion of the servant, the judgment of the master takes a different channel, both in the choice and the wages. The honest and the dissolute have here no comparison of merit. A known thief may be trusted to gather stones; but a steward ought to be proof against the temptations of uncounted gold.

The excise is so far from being of the nature of the first that it is all and more than can commonly be put together in the last: 'Tis a place of *poverty, of trust, of opportunity, and temptation.* A compound of discords, where the more

they harmonize the more they offend. Ruin and reconcilement are produced at once.

To be properly qualified for the employment it is not only necessary that the person should be honest, but that he be sober, diligent and skilful: sober, that he may be always capable of business; diligent, that he may be always in his business; and skilful, that he may be able to prevent or detect frauds against the revenue. The want of any of these qualifications is a capital offense in the excise. A complaint of drunkenness, negligence or ignorance, is certain death by the laws of the board.

It cannot then be all sorts of persons who are proper for the office. The very notion of procuring a sufficient number for even less than the present salary is so destitute of every degree of sound reason that it needs no reply. The employment, from the insufficiency of the salary, is *already* become so inconsiderable in the general opinion that persons of any capacity or reputation will keep out of it; for where is the mechanic, or even the laborer, who cannot earn at least 1s. 9¼d. per day? It certainly cannot be proper to take the dregs of every calling, and to make the excise the common receptable for the indigent, the ignorant and the calamitous.

A truly worthy commissioner, lately dead, made a public offer a few years ago, of putting any of his neighbors' sons into the excise; but though the offer amounted almost to an invitation, one only, whom seven years' apprenticeship could not make a tailor, accepted it; who, after a twelve-month's instruction, was ordered off, but in a few days finding the employment beyond his abilities, he pru-

dently deserted it and returned home, where he now remains in the character of a husbandman.

There are very few instances of rejection even of persons who can scarce write their own names legibly; for as there is neither law to compel, nor encouragement to incite, no other can be had than such as offer, and none will offer who can see any other prospect of living. Everyone knows that the excise is a place of labor, not of ease; of hazard, not of certainty; and that downright poverty finishes the character.

It must strike every considerate mind to hear a man with a large family faithful enough to declare that he cannot support himself on the salary with that honest independence he could wish. There is a great degree of affecting honesty in an ingenuous confession. Eloquence may strike the ear, but the language of poverty strikes the heart; the first may charm like music, but the second alarms like a knell.

Of late years there has been such an admission of improper and ill-qualified persons into the excise that the office is not only become contemptible, but the revenue insecure. Collectors whose long services and qualifications have advanced them to that station are disgraced by the wretchedness of new supers continually. Certainly some regard ought to be had to decency, as well as merit.

These are some of the capital evils which arise from the wretched poverty of the salary. Evils they certainly are; for what can be more destructive in a revenue office, than CORRUPTION, COLLUSION, NEGLECT AND ILL QUALIFICATIONS?

The Paine House at Lewes, England

Here Paine lived before coming to America, and here he wrote "The Case of the Officers of Excise." On the ground floor he conducted a tobacco shop.

The Paine House at Lewes, England

Here Paine lived before coming to America, and here he wrote "The Case of the Officers of Excise." On the ground floor he conducted a tobacco shop.

Should it be questioned whether an augmentation of salary would remove them, I answer there is scarce a doubt to be made of it. Human wisdom may possibly be deceived in its wisest designs; but here every thought and circumstance establish the hope. They are evils of such a ruinous tendency that they must, by some means or other, be removed. Rigor and severity have been tried in vain; for punishment loses all its force where men expect and disregard it.

Of late years the Board of Excise has shown an extraordinary tenderness in such instances as might otherwise have affected the circumstances of their officers. Their compassion has greatly tended to lessen the distresses of the employment: but as it cannot amount to a total removal of them, the officers of excise throughout the kingdom have (as the voice of one man) prepared petitions to be laid before the Honorable House of Commons on the ensuing Parliament.

An augmentation of salary sufficient to enable them to live honestly and competently would produce more good effect than all the laws of the land can enforce. The generality of such frauds as the officers have been detected in have appeared of a nature as remote from inherent dishonesty as a temporary illness is from an incurable disease. Surrounded with *want*, *children* and *despair*, what can the *husband* or the *father* do? No laws compel like nature—no connections bind like blood.

With an addition of salary the excise would wear a new aspect, and recover its former constitution. Languor and

neglect would give place to care and cheerfulness. Men of reputation and abilities would seek after it, and finding a comfortable maintenance, would stick to it. The unworthy and the incapable would be rejected; the power of superiors be re-established, and laws and instructions receive new force. The officers would be secured from the temptations of poverty, and the revenue from the evils of it; the cure would be as extensive as the complaint, and new health out-root the present corruptions.

THOMAS PAINE.

LETTER TO DR. GOLDSMITH

PAINE'S pamphlet reviewing the desperate case of the English officers of excise having been printed, he sent a copy of it to Oliver Goldsmith, the famous poet-novelist-playwright, with the accompanying letter, just before Christmas in 1772. In view of the poverty and hardships that Dr. Goldsmith himself had suffered, this appeal in behalf of the poorly paid excisemen was undoubtedly interesting. In fact, Goldsmith at once answered Paine's letter and made an appointment for a meeting. Paine may be identified as the friend to whom the celebrated author of "The Deserted Village," "She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Vicar of Wakefield," shortly before his death, gave the epitaph first printed in Paine's "Pennsylvania Magazine," January, 1775, beginning:

"Here Whitefoord reclines, and deny it who can,
Though he merrily lived he is now a grave man."

In giving it Goldsmith said, "It will be of no use to me where I am going."

HONORED SIR: Herewith I present you with the case of the officers of excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular; but the following reasons and information will, I presume, sufficiently apologize. I act, myself, in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promotor of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary.

A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of £500, for supporting the expenses. The excise officers in all cities and corporate towns, have obtained letters of recommendation from the

electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The inclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appears in the House.

The memorial before you won so much approbation while in manuscript that I was advised to print four thousand copies: three thousand of which were subscribed for the officers in general, and the remaining one thousand reserved for presents. Since the delivering them I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance that, were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain. The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. It is my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office.

I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine, or anything else, and apologize for this trouble as a singular favor conferred on

His unknown
Humble servant and admirer,
THOMAS PAINE.

Excise Coffee House,
Broad Street, December 21, 1772.

P. S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND INDEX

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME I

PAGE

Portrait of Thomas Paine by Romney . . . . *Frontispiece*
Letter to General Nathanael Greene 124
Paine House at Thetford, England 188
Angel Inn, Islington, London 252
Thomas Paine Memorial House 316

VOLUME II

Title Page, First Edition "Common Sense" . . . *Frontispiece*
Original Title Page "American Crisis" No. II. . . . 280
Original Title Page "American Crisis" No. III. . . . 312

VOLUME III

Statue of Thomas Paine by Richards . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Paine Cottage, New Rochelle 120
John Wesley Jarvis 248

VOLUME IV

Bust of Thomas Paine . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Breaking Ground for Memorial House 120
Luxembourg Palace, Paris 248

VOLUME V

Thomas Clio Rickman . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Letter to George Washington 120
Earliest Original Paine Letter 248

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME VI

PAGE

Portrait of Thomas Paine by Peel . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Fall of the Bastille 120

Paine Monument 216

VOLUME VII

Portrait of Thomas Paine by Bonneville . . . *Frontispiece*

Rights of Man and Constitution Badge 120

Fall of the Bastille 248

VOLUME VIII

Title Page, First Edition "Age of Reason" . . . *Frontispiece*

Richard Carlile 120

Manuscript of Motion by Paine 248

VOLUME IX

Bust of Thomas Paine, Independence Hall . . . *Frontispiece*

Paine House, New Rochelle 120

Title Page, First Edition "Examination of the Prophecies" 216

VOLUME X

Silhouette of Thomas Paine . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Manuscript of a Poem entitled "Contentment" 248

Paine House at Lewes, England 344

INDEX

A

ABEL, OF CAIN AND (Prospect Papers), ix: 93
Abenezra, on The book of Job, ix: 53, viii: 171
ABILITY OF AMERICA, OF THE PRESENT, ii: 150
ABBÉ RAYNAL, LETTER TO THE, iv: 117
ABBÉ RAYNAL, INTRODUCING A LETTER TO, iv: 111
ABBÉ SIEYÈS, TO THE, vii: 127
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (*French*) their judgment of Paine's bridge, x: 189, 206; recommends Paine's bridge (1787), i: 173
Act, The Arbitration, x: 247
Act of Confederation, The (1781), vi: 287
Act, The Declaratory, iv: 120
Act of February 1766, ii: 258
Act, The Stamp, iv: 119
Adam, two Adams (St. Paul), viii: 35
Adam and Eve, Persian version of, ix: 124
Adam, Mr., his comment on the "Rights of Man, Part II," vii: 139
ADAMS, JOHN, his abuse of patronage, x: 253; character of, x: 110; denounces "Rights of Man," i: 235; his ideas on the Presidency, i: 173; "the mighty Ant of the East", x: 112; opposes Paine, x: 89; political character of, x: 151; proposes hereditary government, x: 110, 115; proposes hereditary Presidency, v: 147; was not born for immortality, x: 104
ADAMS, THE HON. SAMUEL, CORRESPONDENCE WITH, viii: 295
ADAMS, SAMUEL, Paine's letter to (6 Mar. 1795), i: 391
ADDENDA (Letter to Monroe from prison (Oct. 4, 1794)), v: 99
Addison, his version of the XIX Psalm, viii: 46
ADDRESS AND DECLARATION (Aug. 20, 1791, at the Thatched House Tavern, approving the French Revolution), v: 41
ADDRESS TO LORD HOWE, AN (Poem), x: 315
[ADDRESS] TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND (Crisis VII), iii: 65
ADRRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND (Crisis VIII), iii: 101
ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE, vii: 261
ADDRESSERS OF THE LATE PROCLAMATION, LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE, vii: 185
Adet, M., French Minister to America, v: 189
ADVANTAGES OF LIFE IN A PLURALITY OF WORLDS (Age of Reason, I), viii: 83
Advertisement, for book by the Abbé Raynal, iv: 112
Æsop's "Fables," the Bible no older than, viii: 163
AFRICAN SLAVERY IN AMERICA, ii: 3
"African Slavery in America," published (1775), i: 20
African Slavery, Paine denounces, x: 187
AFFAIR OF SILAS DEANE, THE, iii: 281
AFFAIRS OF THE BANK, THE (Dissertations), iv: 219, 221
AGE OF REASON, THE (Part First), viii: 1
AGE OF REASON, THE (Part Second), viii: 103
"AGE OF REASON, THE," LETTERS CONCERNING, viii, 287
AGE OF REASON, THE, PROSECUTION OF
  Introduction, viii: 309
  A Letter to Mr. Erskine, viii: 311
"Age of Reason, The," Paine begins writing (1793), i: 323; the writing of, viii: 103, 302; Barlow arranges its publication, i: 358
Agency, Acts of Negotiation and, iv: 235
AGRARIAN JUSTICE, x: 1
  Author's Inscription, x: 1
  Author's English Preface, x: 7
  Agrarian Justice, x: 9
Agrarian Law, Injustice of, x: 14

Agriculture and Commerce, "Cato" on, ii: 212, 214
Aitkin, Robert, founds the "Pennsylvania Magazine," i: 18
ALEXANDER THE GREAT, NEW ANECDOTES OF, ii: 34
Atheism, France tending toward, viii: 303
ALLEGORY, of America, ii: 67; of Darkness and Light, ix: 93; in the Fall of Man, ix: 34; of Jupiter and the countryman, i: 296; on the allegory of the potter, ix: 307
ALLIANCE, advantages of, between England, France and America, vii: 42; vii: 94; vii: 150; Quadruple alliance projected (1787), i: 174; doctrine of entangling, x: 171; always on basis of mutual interest, iv: 328; England not served by foreign, iv: 338
Almighty Lecturer, God as the, viii: 56
Amendments to the constitution, provision for, vi: 320
AMERICA, AFRICAN SLAVERY IN, ii: 3
AMERICA, A CITIZEN OF, TO THE CITIZENS OF EUROPE, v: 63
AMERICA, THE MAGAZINE IN, ii: 17
AMERICA, OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF, ii: 150
AMERICA, an allegory of, ii: 67; as refuge for Louis XVI, vii: 304; on constitutions, beginning of, vi: 282; British acts regulate trade with (1789), i: 206; British errors regarding, iii: 112; British conduct toward, iii: 79; causes of the prosperity of, iii: 164; changing ideas in, iv: 193; commerce of, iii: 91; vii: 9; degree of improvement in, ii: 27; description of, vi: 232, 245; early friends and enemies of its cause, iv: 164; errors of, iii: 177; expense of Federal Government, vi: 278; first to make constitutions by convention, x: 271; Franklin urges Paine to come to, i: 15; future of, vi: 272; government should be formed in, ii: 162; new danger lies in indifference, iii: 169; ingratitude to Paine, x: 122; the king of, ii: 147; must not use method of Barbary powers, x: 145; naval resources of, ii: 159; non-payment of debts (1789), i: 207; only one Order in, x: 264; the only real republic, vi: 269; one preventable error of, iii: 178; Paine suspects treason in her government, x: 131; poverty absent in America, vii: 148; prejudice against France, vi: 5; project for a government in, ii: 144; a prophecy of future wealth, ii: 255; revenues of, iii: 130; restrictions on the Presidency in, vi: 316; royalism after the revolution, i: 147; shipbuilding the pride of, ii: 155; sole ally of Republican France, vii: 312; speculation of the future of, i: 181; supplies of powder for, i: 65; tables of the expense of government, vii: 146; tried to avoid war, iii: 105; union of the colonies through war, iii: 29; the various nationalities in, vi: 245; would enter alliance with France and England, vii: 94.
America, The Bank of North, see Bank of North America
AMERICAN AFFAIRS, THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF, ii: 122
American Crisis, The, see Crisis, The American
AMERICAN DELEGATE, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL MONTGOMERY AND AN, ii: 251
American Philosophical Society, The, ii: 32; iv: 43
Americans, our great title, iii: 246; in Paris, attempt to release Paine, viii: 106
Americanus, paid by Gérard, i: 88; the pamphlet of, iv: 1; the signature, iv: 11
"Amphitrite," "Seine" and "Mercury," French supplies sent in, i: 73; supplies embarked in the, iii: 323
Amsterdam, The Bank of, iv: 350
ANACHRONISMS, BIBLICAL (Prospect Papers), ix: 158
"Ancient Testimony and Principles of the people called Quakers, etc.," quoted, ii: 188; treasonable character of, ii: 344
André, Major, Arnold furnishes plans to, iii: 153
ANECDOTES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT, NEW, ii: 34
Angel Inn at Islington, Paine lives at (1790), i: 229
Angel, Joshua and the, viii: 166
Angels, their mention in thé Bible, ix: 199
Annapolis, continental conference at (1786), vi: 289
"Année Religieuse des Théophilanthropes," quoted, viii: 345
Annual Register, quoted, iv: 182

ANSWER TO A FRIEND, AN, viii: 287
ANSWER TO FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POWERS, v: 15
Apoplexy, Paine stricken with a fit of, ix: 293
Apostles, the Acts of the, ix: 148; Creed, the, ix: 105
APPEAL TO THE CONVENTION, v: 73
APPENDIX, AUTHOR'S (Contradictory Doctrines between Matthew and Mark), ix: 299
Appointment, Council of (N. Y. State), x: 254
APPRECIATION OF THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIS HISTORY, AN, viii: 11
Arcadia, Cupid in, ii: 49
ARCHES, ETC., THE CONSTRUCTION OF, v: 1
Arbitration Act, The, x: 247
Arbitration, more important than courts of law, x: 249
ARISTOCRACY, decay of the French, iv: 138; the origins of, v: 229; prophecy of the early fall of, vi: 226
Arithmetic, of the decimal system, ix: 65
ARMY, estimate of the cost of the, iii: 134; Paine proposes pensions for, vii: 67; Paine's subscription for the, iv: 252; power proper to Commander-in-chief, iv: 225; project for raising and supporting an, iii: 43
ARNOLD, BENEDICT; Deane becomes friend of, i: 94; Silas Deane and, iii: 176; his treachery becomes known, iii: 153
Arrest and Imprisonment of Paine, viii: 105
ARTOIS, COUNT D', conspiracy against National Assembly, vi: 140; disrespect to, vi: 127; disputes with Lafayette, vi: 123
AS TO THE OLD TESTAMENT (Age of Reason, II), viii: 111
Asgill, Captain, letter in defense of, iii: 211; the affair of, i: 140, iv: 215, 217
Asia, the condition of woman in, ii: 88
ASTRONOMY, the plan and order of the Universe, viii: 78; the changes of the moon, ix: 66; the history of, ix: 61
Assembly, French National, see National Assembly (France)
Assembly, New York, see New York Assembly
Assembly of the Notables (France), M. Calonne revives the, vi: 122
Assembly, Pennsylvania (1780) see Pennsylvania Assembly
Association of Nations; Paine proposes an, x: 160
Athanasius, the creed of, viii: 265
Athens and America, vi: 272
Athenian democracy, vi: 266
ATHEISM, Christian religion a sort of, viii: 49; created by fanaticism, ix: 12; the nature of, ix: 84; Paine attacked for, i: 394
ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO THE, vii: 131
Audibert, Achille, accompanies Paine to France (1792), vii: 179; his letter to Thuriot (20 Aug. 1794), i: 373
Augusta, blowing up of the, iii: 274
Augustine, and the account of the Fall of Man, ix: 38
Austria, the Emperor of, x: 84
AUTHOR'S APPENDIX (Contradictory doctrines between Matthew and Mark), ix: 299
AUTHOR'S PROFESSION OF FAITH, THE (Age of Reason), viii: 3
AUTHOR'S OF "LE RÉPUBLICAIN," TO THE, vii: 116
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, i: 459
Avarice, the character of, iii: 137

B

BABEL, THE TOWER OF (Prospect Papers), ix: 95
Babeuf, the conspiracy of, x: 4
Babylonian captivity, as origin of Genesis and Exodus, ix: 49
Bache, Richard, Paine meets him, i: 17
Balance of Legislative and Executive powers, v: 18; of power, v: 68; of trade, v: 284
BANK, THE AFFAIRS OF THE (Dissertations), iv: 221
Bank of Amsterdam, the, iv: 350
Bank, The Merchants', x: 240
BANK OF NORTH AMERICA, THE, an attack on, iv: 255, 302; its charter a contract, iv: 245; observation on its finances, i: 159; organization of, iv: 254; Paine's defense of (1785), i: 152
Bank, The Pennsylvania, origin of, iv: 248
Bank, Sir Joseph, Paine sends bridge-model to (1787), i: 171

Banking, see Finance
Bankruptcy, of a state, iv: 241
Barbarous tribes, the women of, ii: 86
Barbary Powers, the methods of, x: 145
Barclay, his Address to Charles II, quoted, ii: 186
BARLOW, JOEL, Paine gives MSS. of "Age of Reason" to, viii: 105; on Paine's mechanical genius, i: 185; Paine taken to house of, i: 325; arranges publication of "Age of Reason," i: 358
Barrère, Paine's relations with, v: 119; Paine's letter to (September, 1793), i: 335
Bastille, the taking of the, vi: 39; key to the, exhibited at Washington's audiences, i: 226; Lafayette entrusts Paine with key to, i: 221; the taking of the, vi: 39
Bastille, Governor of the, see De Launay
BATTLE of Brandywine, iii: 263; of Lexington, ii: 124; of Moore's Creek Bridge, N. C., ii: 198, 211; of Plassey, ii: 39; of Princeton, iv: 136; of Trenton, iv: 131
Bayard, Colonel, Speaker of Pennsylvania Assembly, iii: 265
BEAUMARCHAIS, CARON DE, and the "lost million," i: 89; his death, i: 93; projects a bridge over the Seine, i: 173; raises first loan for America, i: 63; and the supplies in the *Amphitrite,* iii: 323; plan to aid America, i: 65
Beer, the taxes on, vii: 74
Bells, on the impropriety of church bells, ix: 25
Benoit, keeper of the Luxembourg prison, viii: 105; his kindness, i: 365
Bernard, Sir Francis, ii: 13
Berkenhout, Dr., correspondence with Arthur Lee, iii: 295; and the British Commissioners, iii: 346
Berne, The bear in, vi: 311
BEST WAY TO SERVE GOD, THE (Age of Reason, I), viii: 89
Bevis, Dr. R. S., Paine's acquaintance with, viii: 69
Bible, see Testament, Old, and Testament, New
BIBLICAL ANACHRONISM (Prospect Papers), ix: 158
BIBLICAL BLASPHEMY (Prospect Papers), ix: 156
Biddle, Owen, Paine as a clerk to, i: 130
"Bien-informe," letter to the editors of, x: 77
Bill, The Declaratory, of the Marquis of Rockingham, ii: 258
Bill, The Quebec, ii: 14
Bills of Conciliation, Lord North's, iii: 320; sent to Commissioners at New York, iv: 150; rejected (1778), iv: 181
Bill of Rights, The, vi: 296, vii: 233
Bingham, William, Paine's letter to (1777), i: 43
Birmingham, the poor-rates in the town of, vii: 51
BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, EXTRACTS FROM A REPLY TO THE, ix: 33
BISHOP MOORE, TO MR. MOORE, OF NEW YORK, COMMONLY CALLED (Prospect Papers), ix: 126
Bishops, their treatment in the French Revolution, vi: 62
Blake, William, warns Paine of arrest, i: 276
BLASPHEMY, BIBLICAL (Prospect Papers), ix: 156
Blasphemy, definition of, viii: 311
Blue laws of Connecticut, ix: 114
Bond, Phineas, attributed to, comment on Paine, v: 174
Bonneville, Margaret Brazier, legatee of Paine, x: 293; mutilates Paine's MSS., i: 404; Paine's letter to (15 Nov. 1802), i: 422
Bonneville, Nicholas, Paine's residence with, i: 417
BOOK OF JOHN, THE (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 263
BOOK OF LUKE, THE (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 260
BOOK OF MARK, THE (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 255
BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, OF THE (Prospect Papers), ix: 146
Borden, Joseph, Paine's friend at Bordentown, i: 156
BORDENTOWN, Paine's house burned at, iii: 279; Paine buys house at (1783), i: 142; Paine returns to (1786), i: 156
BOSTON: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON, ii: 11; Massacre, the, iv: 125; Port Bill, the, ii: 256
Bottetourt, Lord (Governor of Virginia), Lord Hillsborough's letter to, quoted, iv: 87
Boucher, Rev. Jonathan, his conversation with Washington, i: 27
Bourbons, on the restoration of the, v: 66
Brain, the human, ix: 192
Brandywine, the battle of, iii: 263

Bribe, offered to Paine by Gérard, i: 84; Paine reveals Gérard's offer, i: 87
BRIDGE, THE IRON, x: 189
BRIDGES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRON, x: 203
BRIDGES AND BRIDGE MODELS, PAINE'S, Academy of Sciences (Paris) recommends (1787), i: 173; letter on a bridge over the Schuylkill, i: 161; letter on the construction of Paine's, i: 194; Paine's bridge sent to London (1790), i: 223; Paine's models at Bordentown, i: 142; Paine projects 400-foot arch, i: 170; Paine's bridge in process of construction, i: 202; the Sunderland, x: 213; built in 1789, i: 189; iron bridge, its construction at Rotherham, i: 191; Paine's bridge erected in London (1790), i: 227; the iron bridge, Paine's invention of, i: 185; models, the Assembly investigates, i: 165; models made at Bordentown, x: 205; made in England, x: 189, 206; models, a letter on the, i: 160; models sent to Philadelphia (1786), i: 157; the construction of iron, x: 203; plans for the construction of, v: 4; Paine's models of, x: 90.
Brissot, the trial of, viii: 339; Paine's friendship with, i: 283
Brissotins, execution of the, i: 343
BRITAIN, GREAT, see GREAT BRITAIN
British Army, see Great Britain, Army
British Commissioners, see Great Britain, Politics
British Government, see Great Britain, Government
Broglio, Commander, French Royalist army, vi: 43
BURGOYNE, GENERAL, capitulation of, rumored, i: 45; chairman of Select Committee (1773), ii: 42; defeat of, iii: 18; letter to Lord George Germaine, i: 47; Paine proposes to keep his troops, i: 46; treaty seems first recognition of England and America as separate nations, i: 45
BURKE, EDMUND, his attack on the French Revolution, x: 97; his pamphlet against the French Revolution, vi: 4, 15; Paine's conversation with, vii: 238; Paine advises Burke to propose a national convention, vii: 104; Reform Bill, vii: 245; reply to his attack on French Revolution, vi: 157; his secret pension, i: 231, vi: 5, 163, vii: 136, 176, 246; suspected as prosecutor of "Rights of Man," vii: 135
Burlesque of speech in the House of Lords, vii: 193
Burner, central draught, Paine discusses principle of the, i: 154
Burr, Aaron, the intrigues of, x: 136
"Button," Paine's horse, i: 181
Byron, Commodore, his account of South America, quoted, ii: 87

C

Cabal, to remove Washington from command, x: 122
Cabalism, on the fullness of time, ix: 74
Cabinet, The British, determined on war, iv: 129
CAIN AND ABEL, ON (Prospect Papers), ix: 93
Calais, The department of, elects Paine to National Convention, vii: 179; Paine receives ovation at (1792), i: 279
Calonne, M. de, dismissed from post, vi: 123; his measures of taxation, vi: 121
Calumny, should be punishable, i: 308
Canada, respecting the future of, iv: 201
Candle, smokeless, Paine invents a, i: 154; Paine's letter describing, i: 155
Cape Comfort, Territory of Virginia based on, iv: 62
Cape Henry, London Company settles near, iv: 60
Cape Vincent, Admiral Rodney's action off, iv: 208
Captain Death, ii: 155
Capitulation of Burgoyne, supposed, i: 45
Caricature, mankind's love of, iv: 189
CARLETON, TO SIR GUY (A Supernumerary Crisis), iii: 211
Carleton, General, iii: 14; and Admiral Digby, their letter to Washington, iii: 232

Carlile family, imprisonment of the, ix: 307; the prosecution of the, i: 406
Cartoons of Thomas Paine, i: 297
CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE, THE, x: 327
"Case of the Officers of Excise," the writing of, i: 9
CASTLE IN THE AIR, FROM THE, TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD (Poem), x: 321
"Castle in the Air" (pseudonym of Thomas Paine), his letter to "Little Corner of the World," v: 301
CATO, To (Forester's Letters), I, ii: 193; II, ii: 204; III, ii: 222
"Cato," pseudonym of Rev. Dr. William Smith, ii: 193; third letter quoted, ii: 212
CAUSE OF THE YELLOW FEVER, THE, x: 273
Chapman (a London publisher), offers to buy "Rights of Man, II," i: 263
Chaptal, thanks Paine for bridge plans, x: 212
CHARLESTON, confirmation of the loss of, iii: 123; crisis at the fall of, iii: 115; effect of its capture, iii: 117; the loss of (1780), i: 110; the news of the loss of, iv: 253
CHARLES II, Barclay's address to, quoted, ii: 186; cost of his war with the Dutch, vii: 44; and Lauderdale, vii: 278
Charles V., Francis I, challenges, ii: 57
Charter of London Company (James I), quoted, iv: 61
Charter and Corporation towns, origin of, vii: 22
CHARTERS, CONSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS AND, x: 235
Charters and corporations, vii: 18
Chatham, Lord, the error of, iii: 111
Cheetham, James, enmity to Paine, i: 450
Chester County, Pa., Petitions against the Bank of North America, iv: 257, 266
Chew house (Germantown), The attack on the, iii: 271
Child, imitates the works of man, viii: 61
Child Welfare, Paine's plans for, vii: 53; public education, vii: 50; religious instruction, viii: 72
Christ, the temptation of, viii: 96
CHRISTIANISM WITH PANTHEISM, COMPARING (Age of Reason, I), viii: 68
Christians, Africans must abhor, ii: 10; various early sects of, viii: 250
Christian Church, see Church, the Christian
Christian mythology, the five deities of, viii: 72
CHRISTIAN RELIGION, DEISM COMPARED WITH, ETC. (Prospect Papers), ix: 98
CHRISTIANITY AND EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY (Age of Reason, I), viii: 58
CHRISTIANITY, FABULOUS BASES OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 14
CHRISTIANITY, a sort of atheism, viii: 49; contradicts all evidence of nature, viii: 86; derogatory to God, ix: 295; Paine's first doubts of, viii: 71; established by the sword, viii: 270; founded on human sacrifice, ix: 134, 295; worst of religious systems, viii: 278
Chronicles, the book of, ix: 123; the two books of, viii: 153
Chronology, of the Bible, viii: 126
CHURCH BELLS, WORSHIP AND, ix: 14
CHURCH, THE CHRISTIAN, vote on the books of the Bible, viii: 21; system derived from testament, viii: 37; vote on the books of the New Testament, viii: 248; opposed sciences, viii: 63; origin in heathen mythology, viii: 10
Church property, in France, sale of, vi: 197
Churches, the property of all men, ix: 24
Cicero, on the law of reason, ix: 280
CITIZEN OF AMERICA TO THE CITIZENS OF EUROPE, A, v: 63
CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES, THOMAS PAINE TO THE, x: 95
Citizenship, Paine granted French citizenship (1792), i: 274
Civil list, the British, vii: 246
Civil Wars, see Wars, Civil
CIVILIZATION, OF SOCIETY AND (Rights of Man, II), vi: 239
Civilization, prejudice, the enemy of, iv: 170; not yet completely attained, iv: 166
Clinton, General, letter to, iii: 47
CLINTON, SIR HENRY, accountable as commissioner, iii: 99; H. Laurens' letter to, iv: 160; Lord George Germaine's letters to, iii: 204
CLIVE, LORD, REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF, ii: 39
Clive, Lord, his defence, ii: 44; in India, iii: 25; report of Select Committee on, ii: 42
Clootz, Anacharsis, arrested, i: 326; and executed, x: 120

CLYMER, GEORGE, Paine's letters to (15 Aug. 1787), i: 170; (19 Nov. 1786), i: 161; (29 Dec. 1787), i: 172
Coalition government (of Lord North, Pitt and Fox), vii: 85
Cocke, Frances, mother of Thomas Paine, i: 3
Coins, Paine in effigy on coins (England), i: 298
Commandments, The Ten, viii: 8
COMMERCE, of America, vii: 9; of America is free, iii: 91; commercial possibilities of South America, vii: 96; increase of, in N. Y. and Philadelphia, x: 282; might exterminate war, vii: 6; trade and taxes, vii: 49; U. S. shipping liable to capture by Jay's Treaty, x: 160
Commerce, agriculture and, "Cato" on, ii: 212, 214
Commercial Treaty with England, see Treaty
Committee on Constitution (France), Paine a member of, x: 119
Committee for Foreign Affairs, Paine as Secretary of, see Paine, Thomas
Committee of Public Safety (French), hostile to Paine, v: 86
Committee of Philadelphia, vi: 283
Committee to report on the Bank of North America, report of, iv: 258, 284
Committee of Safety, Washington's letter to the, v: 185
Committee, the Select (*Parliament, 1773*), on affairs in India, ii: 41, 43
Commissioners, the British, see Great Britain, Politics
Commissioners to France, the American (1800), x: 82
Commissioners, Paine counsels Congress to send commissioners to mediate between European nations, v: 52
COMMON SENSE
INTRODUCTION, ii: 93
POSTSCRIPT TO PREFACE IN THE THIRD VOLUME, ii: 95
ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL, WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION, ii: 97
THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS, ii: 122
OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA WITH SOME MISCELLANEOUS REFLECTIONS, ii: 150
APPENDIX TO COMMON SENSE, ii: 168
"COMMON SENSE," "Cato" attacks, ii: 204; Paine's loss in publishing, i: 87; Paine's reason for publishing, viii: 69; plagiarized by the Abbé Raynal, iv: 188; the publication and reception of, ii: 338; the success of, vii: 18; the writing of (1775), i: 30
"COMMON SENSE," (*continued*)
"Common Sense," signature of Thomas Paine, ii: 278, 307, 368
Compact, Maritime, see Maritime Compact
COMPARING CHRISTIANISM WITH PANTHEISM (Age of Reason, I), viii: 68
Conception, the Immaculate, see Immaculate Conception
CONCERNING GOD, ETC. (Age of Reason, I), viii: 44
CONCERNING MISSIONS AND REVELATIONS (Age of Reason, I), viii: 6
CONCERNING "THE AGE OF REASON," LETTERS, viii: 287
CONCERNING THE MULTIPLICITY OF RELIGIONS (Age of Reason, I), viii: 86
Conciliatory Bills, the British, see Bills of Conciliation
Condé, the Prince of, his conspiracy, x: 52
Condorcet, his collaboration with Paine, x: 47; plan written in collaboration with, vii: 316
Confederates, the war of the, v: 269
Confederation, the Act of (1781), vi: 287
Conference (*continental*) at Annapolis (1786), vi: 289
CONFESSION, CONTENTMENT OR (Poem), x: 325
Confucius, on the acknowledgment of benefits, ix: 117
CONGRESS, THE AMERICAN, action on bills of conciliation, iv: 155, calls for eight millions, iii: 180; the first two meetings of (1774, 1775), vi: 286; Henry Laurens resigns as President of, iii: 291; inquiry into the affairs of Silas Deane, iii: 288; their intrigues with Burr, x: 136; Lord Howe's invitation to members of, ii: 283; mode of election of, ii: 165; M. de Lafayette's farewell to, vi: 29; Paine's letters to, suppressed, i: 80; Paine's memorial to (5 January, 1779), i: 75; Paine's letter to (30 April, 1779), i: 84; Paine summoned before, i: 76; prohibits importations (1774), ii: 336; rejects oration of "Cato," ii: 210; votes $3000 to Paine, i: 147
Congress, at Vienna, proposed, iii: 203

CONNECTICUT, OF THE SABBATH DAY IN (Prospect Papers), ix: 114
Conquest, the hope of Britain, ii: 336
Conspiracy to elect Burr President, x: 138
Conspiracy of kings, a, vii: 292
CONSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS, AND CHARTERS, x: 235
CONSTITUTIONS, ON (Rights of Man, II), vi: 281
CONSTITUTION, THE FEDERAL, formation of, vi: 286; American, requires Oath of Allegiance to nation only, vi: 319; provision for amendments to, vi: 320; America imposed upon by, x: 249
Constitution of 1776, x: 244; Paine a member of committee on the, x: 119
CONSTITUTION, THE ENGLISH, Lord Grenville's eulogy of, vii: 191; Lord Stormont's eulogy of, vii: 190; remarks on, ii: 97
CONSTITUTION OF 1795, THE FRENCH, Speech in the French National Convention, July 7, 1795, v: 243; an analysis of, x: 39; the foundation of the, v: 17; errors of, x: 3; on improving the, v: 32; must conform to Declaration of Rights, vii: 120
Constitution, Committee of (France), Paine a member of, x: 119
Constitution of New York (1777), formation of the, x: 235
Constitution of New York, system of appointments by, x: 254
Constitution of Pennsylvania, Declaration of rights prefixed to, iv: 229; copies English government, x: 255
Constitution, The Pennsylvania (1776), v: 37; Paine's part in the, i: 101
CONSTITUTION, America first to form constitution by convention, x: 271; the most productive machine for taxation, vi: 297; on the nature of a, vi: 75; the parts of a, vi: 304; the cant word of Parliament, vi: 185
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM (to the citizens of Pennsylvania on the proposal for calling a convention), x: 243
Constitutional Club, Paine a member of, x: 55
"Constitutional Gazette," Feb. 24, 1776, quoted (on "Common Sense"), i: 36
CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES, THE, x: 203
Contempt of Court, origin of, x: 269
CONTENTMENT, OR, IF YOU PLEASE, CONFESSION (Poem), x: 325
Continental Conference (1786), vi: 289
Continental Currency, a forgery of, i: 51
CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK (Author's Appendix), ix: 299
CONVENTION, APPEAL TO THE, v: 73
Convention of 1790, x: 244
Convention of 1776, x: 244
Convention, The French, motion to exclude foreigners (1793), viii: 104; Paine invited to return to, viii: 108
Convention, Paine advises Burke to propose a national, vii: 104
Convention, state of Pennsylvania (1776), vi: 283
Convention of all states, at Philadelphia (1787), vi: 289
Conway, General, moves to end war, iii: 209
Cookis house, York, Pa., i: 50
Corday, Charlotte, kills Marat, i: 314
Carlisle, the earl of, *et al.,* letter to, iii: 47
Cornwallis, George III admits surrender of, iii: 164
Corporation towns, in decay, vii: 22
Corporations and charters, vii: 18
CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE HON. SAMUEL ADAMS, viii: 295
CORRESPONDENCE WITH WASHINGTON, iv: 213
Corsica, Theodore of, iv: 56
Cosmogonies, ancient, ix: 122
Council of Appointment (N. Y. State), x: 254
Council of Five Hundred, the corruption of, x: 55; Paine's letter to (Jan. 28, 1798), x: 217
Councils of Nice and Laodicea, viii, 248, 301, ix: 208
Council of Revision (New York State), powers vested in the, x: 237
Council of Safety (Penna.), memorial presented to, ii: 344
Count d'Artois, the conspiracy of, vi: 40
Country bank notes, a new kind of currency, iv: 362
Cour plénière, the, vi: 129
Court, contempt of, x: 269
Courts, on the burdensome expense of, v: 44
CRANLEY, ONSLOW, LETTERS TO, vii: 159
Cranley, Onslow (Lord Onslow), summons a meeting at Epsom (1792), i: 270; his sinecure, vii: 169
CREATION, account of the, vii: 23, 282; the word of God, viii: 41;

CREATION, (continued)
rights of man must be traced to the, vi: 65; the two stories of, viii: 314; is the word of God, ix: 275
Credulity, a strong trait of English character, iv: 363
CRISIS, THE AMERICAN
I . . . . . ii: 263
II to Lord Howe, . . ii: 279
III . . . . . ii: 309
IV . . . . . ii: 363
V To Gen. Sir William Howe, iii: 1
To the Inhabitants of America, iii: 33
VI To the British Commissioners, iii: 47
VII To the People of England, iii: 65
VIII Address to the People of England, iii: 101
IX . . . . . iii: 109
The Crisis Extraordinary (On the subject of taxation), iii: 125
X On the King of England's speech, iii: 159
To the People of America, iii: 173
XI On the Present State of News, iii: 195
A Supernumerary Crisis (To Sir Guy Carleton), iii: 211
CRISIS, THE AMERICAN, (continued)
XII To the Earl of Shelburne, iii: 219
XIII Thoughts on the Peace, etc., iii: 237
A Supernumerary Crisis (To the People of America), iii: 249
"Crisis, The American," won the battle of Trenton, i: 41
CRISIS EXTRAORDINARY, THE, iii: 125
"Crisis Extraordinary," justified a year later, iii: 179
CRISIS, A SUPERNUMERARY, To the People of America, iii: 249; To Sir Guy Carleton, ii: 211
Crisis, the, No. 2 republished in England, iii: 84
CRITIC, THE SNOWDROP AND THE (Poem), x: 309
Croly: "Life of Burke," quoted, vi: 4
Crown, The, the expense of, vii: 34; prerogatives of the, iii: 88
Crucifixion, the, viii: 226
Cultivation, one of greatest human improvements, x: 14
Culloden, sequel of the battle of, iii: 171
CUPID AND HYMEN, ii: 49
Curiosity, of human, iv: 161
Currier, Robert J., Paine letter in collection of, i: 161
"Cyropædia" (of Xenophon), quoted, ix: 72

D

Dalrymple, Sir John, the pamphlet of, iii: 145; pamphlet, quoted, ii: 170
Daniel, the book of, viii: 204
DANTON, LETTER TO, v: 55
Danton, Paine's letter to (May 6, 1793), i: 304; imprisonment and death of, i: 360
Dartmouth, Lord, letter to Governor Dunmore, iv: 88
David, not the author of the psalms, viii: 174
Darien, Sir Francis Drake in, iv: 71
DEAN, ANDREW, A LETTER TO, ix: 293
DEANE, JAY AND GÉRARD, MESSRS., iii: 351
DEANE, THE AFFAIR OF SILAS, iii: 281
DEANE'S AFFAIR, MR., TO THE PUBLIC ON, iii: 303
DEANE, SILAS, the affair of (G. Morris' account), i: 89; and the lost despatches, i: 69; becomes friend of Benedict Arnold, i: 94; Congress pays $37,000 to his heirs, i: 94; his death in England, i: 94; denunciation of, iii: 173; intimacy with Gérard, i: 88; Paine's dispute concerning, vii: 18; letter to Morris or Benjamin Harrison (Dec. 20, 1777), i: 58; Paine denies him credit for French subsidies, i: 72; Paine's judgment of, i: 130; the affair of Paine's memorial to Congress, i: 75, 77; Paine's opposition to, x: 128; to the Public on Mr. Deane's affair, iii: 303; recalled from Paris, i: 57; takes credit for Beaumarchais' million, i: 63; tries to arouse enmity between France and America, i: 125
DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE, THE, (Poem), x: 301
Death, Captain, of the *"Terrible"* privateer, i: 6; vii: 17

Death penalty, proposed abolition of, in France, vii: 306
Debt, National, of England, See National Debt and Finance
Debts, non-payment of, by America (1789), i: 207
Decimal division of time, ix: 69
Decimal system, the, ix: 65
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, authorized by states, ii: 346; the necessity for a, ii: 166; only salvation of America, iii: 247; Paine's part in the, i: 31
DECLARATION, PLAN OF A (of the natural, Civil and Political Rights of Man), vii: 315
DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS, vi: 145
DECLARATION OF RIGHTS, OBSERVATIONS ON THE, vi: 151
DECLARATION OF RIGHTS, French Constitution must conform to, vii: 120; by M. de Lafayette, vi: 43; opposed for American Constitution, i: 175; Louis XVI signs the, vi: 60
Declaration of Rights (Prefixed to Constitution of Pennsylvania), iv: 229
Declaration of rights, in Penn. Convention (1776), vi: 284
Declaratory Act, the, iv: 120; quoted, ii: 313
DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE, v: 255
Defence of woman, ii: 91
DEFENSIVE WAR, THOUGHTS ON, ii: 79
DEFINING THE TRUE REVELATION (Age of Reason), viii: 41
de Foe, Daniel, "The true-born Englishman" quoted, x: 257
DEFORGUES (*French Minister of Foreign Affairs*), collusion with Gov. Morris, i: 347, 351; letter to Gov. Morris (Feb. 19, 1794), i: 350; Gov. Morris' letter to (Feb. 14, 1794), i: 349; imprisoned in Luxembourg, i: 360
DEISM, AND THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE ON (Prospect Papers), ix: 138
DEISM COMPARED WITH THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, ETC. (Prospect Papers), ix: 98
DEISM, the deism of Cicero, ix: 282; every person a deist, ix: 98; Quakerism nearest to, viii: 73; universal article of religion, ix: 19
Deist, Benjamin Franklin a, ix: 312
De Launay (Governor of the Bastille), killed by mob, vi: 149
Delaware, Lord, chosen governor, iv: 75
DELAWARE, RETREAT ACROSS THE, iii: 257
DELEGATE, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GHOST OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY AND AN AMERICAN, ii: 251
Deluge, the story of, viii: 321
Democracy, Athenian, vi: 266
Despatches, the lost, i: 69
Despotism, in France, vi: 32
"Detector-P," Signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 155
De Thionville, Lanthenas' letter to (7 Aug. 1794), i: 358
Deuteronomy, the book of, viii: 120
Devil, first mentioned in Matthew, ix: 231
Devoe, Frederick, Paine is granted the farm of, i: 148
DIALOGUE, A (BETWEEN THE GHOST OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY AND AN AMERICAN DELEGATE), ii: 251
DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON, ii: 11
Digby, Admiral, and General Carleton, their letter to Washington, iii: 232
Diodorus Siculus, of ancient years, ix: 67
Diogenes Laertius, on Jewish doctrine, ix: 42
Directory, the French, attack on, x: 53
Disarmament, Paine's plan for, vii: 95
Dissenters, established English industries, vi: 107
DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT, v: 207
DISSERTATIONS, ON GOVERNMENT; THE AFFAIRS OF THE BANK; AND PAPER MONEY, iv: 221; Preface, iv: 219
Dissenting Ministers, subsidy to, vii: 248
DOG, FARMER SHORTS' DOG PORTER; A TALE (Poem), x: 303
Don, Paine constructs bridge for the river Don (1789), v: 8
Dover, Paine stopped by Customs at (1792), i: 277, vii: 179
Dowla, Surajah, nabob of Bengal, Lord Clive deposes, ii: 43
Dragonetti, *"Virtues and Reward"* quoted, ii: 147
Dragon of Wantley, the, viii: 203
Drake, Sir Francis, in Darien, iv: 71
DREAM, AN ESSAY ON (INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER), ix: 191

DREAM INTERPRETED, THE, ii: 67
Druids, religion of the Masonry derived from the, ix: 171
Duchâtelet, Achille, signs propositions of Republican Club, vii: 301
DUELLING, ii: 55
Dumond, Etienne, his characterization of Paine, v: 146
Dumouriez, the defection of, v: 49; his treason to the French Republic, i: 309, 311
DUNDAS, HENRY (LATER VISCOUNT MELVILLE)
To MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS, vii: 137
To MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS (CALAIS, SEPT. 15, 1792), vii: 179
Dundas, Henry (Lord Melville) Paine characterizes him as a swindler, x: 258; his statement in Parliament, i: 264
Dunmore, Lord, appointed governor of Virginia, iv: 88

E

EARL OF SHELBURNE, TO THE (Crisis xii), iii: 219
Earth, the dimensions of the, viii: 75
Ecclesiastes, the Book of, viii: 176
Eden, Sir William, Esq., *et al.,* letter to, iii: 47
Education, One schoolmaster more use than a hundred priests, ix: 23; Paine's plan for universal education, vii: 60
Egyptian version, of Cain and Abel, ix: 93
EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR, THE, x: 39
Electioneering, in England, vii: 256
Elisha, the story of, viii: 201
Elizabeth, Queen, gives Charter to Virginia, iv: 58
Ellsworth, Oliver, Paine's interview with, x: 82
Elmer, Eben, Letter to Paine (11 Dec. 1802), i: 424
EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES, iv: 47
Embargo, on imports by Congress of 1774, ii: 336; on trade with West Indies, iii: 251
Emmet, Thomas Addis, legatee of Paine, x: 293
Employment, Paine's plan for public, vii: 63
Enemies, the doctrine of forgiveness of, viii: 372
"Enemy to Cant and Imposition," a signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 116
Engine, Paine projects an explosive, i: 188
ENGLAND, [ADDRESS] TO THE PEOPLE OF (Crisis VII), iii: 65
ENGLAND, ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF (Crisis VIII), iii: 101
ENGLAND, TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND, ON THE INVASION OF, x: 217
England, New, see New England
English character, credulity a trait of, iv: 362
ENGLISH CONSTITUTION, REMARKS ON THE (Common Sense), ii: 97
English Navigation Act, The, iv: 329
English newspapers, the character of, iv: 369
English people, never fairly dealt by, vi: 228
ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE, THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE, v: 255
"Entangling alliances," doctrine of, x: 171
ENTERTAINING HINTS, USEFUL AND, ii: 25
Entic: "Naval History," quoted, ii: 153
EPISTLE TO QUAKERS, ii: 183
Equality, a consideration of, x: 2
Equality of liberty, the glory of every Briton, ii: 12
Epsom, the meeting at, vii: 166, 159
Erskine, Thomas, Paine's counsel at trial (1792), i: 293; his speech, i: 296
Estates, the Three, x: 262
Esther, the Book of, viii: 169
ESSAY ON DREAM, AN (INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER), ix: 191
ESSAY FOR THE USE OF NEW REPUBLICANS IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO MONARCHY, AN, vii: 271
ESSAYS, MISCELLANEOUS, vii: 116
Euclid's "Elements of Geometry," the only authenticated ancient writing, viii: 115
European politics (1788), on, i: 194
EUROPE, A CITIZEN OF AMERICA TO THE CITIZENS OF, v: 63
EXAMINATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (Age of Reason, I), viii: 21
EXAMINATION OF THE PROPHECIES, Author's Preface, ix: 205
Examination of the Prophecies, ix: 211
EXCISE, CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF THE, x: 327

Excise, Paine appointed to the (1764), i: 7
EXECUTIVE POWERS, ANSWER TO FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE LEGISLATIVE AND, v: 15
Executive power, weakness of the, v: 21
EXISTENCE OF GOD, THE, ix: 1
Exodus, the book, not known before Babylonian captivity, ix: 49
EXTRACTS FROM A REPLY TO THE BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, ix: 33
EXTRAORDINARY, THE CRISIS, iii: 125
Ezekiel, the Book of, vii: 204
Ezra, the Book of, viii: 164

F

FABULOUS BASES OF CHRISTIANITY (Age of Reason, I), viii: 14
FAITH, THE AUTHOR'S PROFESSION OF (Age of Reason), viii: 3
Fall of Man, Jesus never mentions the, ix: 104; vii: 318; St. Augustine and the, ix: 38
Fanaticism, the enemy of religion, ix: 1
FARMER SHORT'S DOG PORTER; A TALE (Poem), x: 303
Federal newspapers, the, x: 287
Fauste, on the Evangelists, viii: 249
Feasts, religious, regulated by the moon, ix: 68
FEDERAL FACTION, TO THE LEADERS OF THE, x: 95
Federal government, Paine proposes a, v: 141
Federal right to make new States, iv: 96
FEDERALISTS, their attempt to involve America in war, x: 144; the character of the, x: 98; injustice to Jefferson and Paine, x: 173; newspapers, the, x: 126; Paine should be first on lists of, x: 105; press, their treatment of Paine's letter to Jefferson, x: 159; Fellows, John, Paine's letter to, (19 July, 1805), i: 447; (31 July, 1805), i: 432
FEMALE SEX, AN OCCASIONAL LETTER ON THE, ii: 85
Ferdinand of Brunswick, Prince, offered command of American army, iii: 335
Ferguson, Prof. Adam, his note on, iii: 57; on the condition of woman, ii: 90
FEVER, THE CAUSE OF THE YELLOW, x: 273
FINANCE, accounts of Thomas Morris, iii: 330; affairs of the Bank, iv: 221; Association of Merchants, iii: 122; bankruptcy of a state, iv: 241; Britain in danger from credit, iv: 340; British national debt, iii: 83; comparison of Britain and America, iii: 30; Congress resolves to fund the currency, iii: 152, cost of representative government, vii: 47; decline and fall of the English system of, v: 255; depreciation of value of taxes, iii: 178; English ignorance of, i: 208; forgery of continental bills by Sir William Howe, iii: 7; gold and silver in France and England, vi: 188; loans to a state, iv: 239; national debts of England and France, iv: 364; observations on the Bank of North America, i: 159; of banking, v: 285; on a new kind of currency, iv: 362; on a petition for lower taxes, iii: 192; organization of the Bank of North America, iv: 254; Paine proposes duty on imports; the scarcity of currency, iii: 138; paper currency, iv: 221, 291, v: 59; paper currency in England, iii: 8; petition for funding currency, iii: 144; Pitt's plan for funding the national debt, iv: 360; problem of supporting the army, iii: 182; proposal for raising funds, iii: 147; State and Federal funds distinct, iii: 189; taxes difficult to pay, iii: 138; vote for repeal of tender laws (1780), iv: 299; war increases amount of paper currency, iv: 361; revenues of England and France, iv: 346
FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT, DISSERTATION ON, v: 207
FISHERIES, PEACE AND THE NEWFOUNDLAND,
I. Messrs. Hall and Sellers (30 June, 1779), iv: 1
II. (From the Pennsylvania Gazette, 14 July, 1779), iv: 11
Fossils, in the Philadelphia Library Company, ii: 25
Fitzsimmons, Hon. Thomas, Paine's letter to (19 May 1786), i: 161; Paine's letter to (19 Nov. 1786), i: 158
Flags, exchange of, between France and America, v: 189

Flesselles, M. de (Mayor of Paris), involved in plot, vi: 46
"Flying Camp," Paine enlists in the, i: 39
Folger, Captain, his dispatches stolen, iii: 321, i: 69
FORESTER'S LETTERS, THE
I. To CATO, ii: 193
II. To CATO, ii: 204
III. To CATO, ii: 222
To THE PEOPLE, ii: 236
IV. . . . . ii: 240
"Forester, The," signature of Thomas Paine to The Forester's Letters, ii: 203
FORGETFULNESS, v: 301
Forgery, of continental bills, iii: 7, i: 51
Foreigners, Robespierre's decree against, i: 313
Fort Lee, the situation at, ii: 266
Fox, Charles James, Paine's meeting with, i: 216
FRANCE, ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF, vii: 261
FRANCE, abolition of national priesthood, viii: 3; "Agrarian Justice" inscribed to, x: 1; always defeated by England, ix: 28; America the sole ally of, vii: 312; Assembly of the Notables, vi: 122; Assistance hoped from, ii: 227; condition of, in 1789, ii: 203, v: 9; conspiracies against, x: 4; corrupted by priests, ix: 24; Deane tries to divide America and, iii: 175; Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens, vi: 145; despotism in, vi: 32; England declares war on (1787), i: 174; her interest in the American Fisheries, iv: 6; her treasury empty (1802), x: 94; Morris tries to abrogate American treaty with, i: 331; on the invasion of, vii: 268; on the propriety of bringing Louis XVI to trial, vii: 291; Paine's trip to (1781), i: 121; Paine's trip to (1792), vii: 179; Paine's visit to, i: 221; Paine's visit to (1787), i: 167; prerevolutionary taxation, vi: 121; tending toward atheism, vii: 303; supplies from (1781), i: 122
Francis I of France, challenges Charles V, ii: 57
Franchise, qualifications for, vii: 253
FRANKLIN IN PARIS, LETTER TO, iii: 263
FRANKLIN, BENJAMIN, appointed minister to France, iii: 338; a deist, ix: 312; bridge models sent to (1786), i: 158; character of, viii: 178; Deane's friendship for Franklin, i: 58; letter to Paine,
(24 Sept. 1785), i: 153;
(27 Sept. 1775), i: 25;
on the system of two legislative houses, x: 271; Paine's friendship with, i: 24; Paine's letter to,
(28 May 1781), i: 122;
(23 Sept. 1785), i: 153;
(31 Dec. 1785), i: 155;
(6 June 1786), i: 157;
(31 March 1787), i: 164;
Paine meets him (1774), i: 14; President of State Convention in Philadelphia (1776), vi: 284; proposition offered to, vi: 90; secret offers to, iii: 199; the "lost million," i: 92; urges Paine to write history of American Revolution, i: 115; urges Paine to emigrate to America, i: 15
Freedom, must originate with the people, iv: 344
Freemason's Tavern (London), meetings at, vii: 237
FREEMASONRY, ORIGIN OF, ix: 167
FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA, TO THE, x: 177
French authors and philosophers, vi: 116
French National Assembly, see National Assembly (French)
French National Convention, see National Convention (French)
French Revolution, see Revolution (French)
FRIEND, AN ANSWER TO A, vii: 287
"Friend to the Indians, A," signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 113
"Friends of the people," vii: 237, 262
FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD (Poem), x: 321
Frost, Mr., accompanies Paine to France (1792), vii: 179
FRUCTIDOR, THE EIGHTEENTH, x: 39
FUTURE STATE, MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A, ix: 303

GAGE, GENERAL, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON, ii: 11
Galileo, discovery of telescope (1610), viii: 63
Galloway, Joseph, used signature "Americanus," iv: 11
Garde du Corps (French), insult the national insignia, vi: 56
Gates, General, plan to replace Washington by, iii: 19
Geneaology, of Christ, viii: *222*
GENERAL WOLFE, THE DEATH OF (Poem), x: 301
GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN, ii: 11
Genet, Citizen, compared to Gouverneur Morris, v: 164
Genius, a magazine the nursery of, ii: 18; not hereditary, vi: *264*
GENESIS, OF THE NAMES IN THE BOOK OF, ix: 46
GENESIS, THE BOOK OF, account of creation, viii: *282*; analysis of, ix: 33; Gentile origin of, ix: 52; inconsistencies of, ix: 94; names in X Chapter of, ix: 50; written as preface, ix: 45
Gentiles, the character of the ancient, viii: 174; worshipped one God, viii: *210*
Geology, the benefits from the study of, ii: *26*
GEORGE III, abandons colonies, iii: 97; concerning his speech (1775), ii: 168; correspondence published in (1867), iii: 176; insanity of, i: 199, *200*, *205*, v: *12*, vi: 182; on the King of England's speech (Crisis X), iii: 159; letters show treachery by Deane, i: 94; "Royal Criminal," ii: *252*; Royal Pedigree, vii: *273*; speech quoted, iii: 101, 161
GÉRARD, MESSRS. DEANE, JAY AND, iii: 351
GERARD, CONRAD ALEXANDER, French Minister to America, i: 55; complains to Congress of Paine's letter, i: 74; his charges against Paine, i: 83; his intimacy with Silas Deane, i: 88; letter to Vergennes (17 Jan. 1780), i: 85; offer to Paine, iii: 355; Paine reveals his offer of bribe, i: 87; pays writers of political articles, i: 88
Germaine, Lord George, Burgoyne's letter to, i: 47; letters captured, iii: *204*
Germantown, battle of, iii: 19, *268*
Gibraltar, the ill-policy of holding, iv: *203*
Gideon, refuses kingship, ii: 110
Girondins, the, i: 302
Gloucester, the Duke of, suggested to replace George III, ii: 305
GOD, THE BEST WAY TO SERVE, viii: 80
GOD, THE EXISTENCE OF, ix: 1
GOD, all time is his, ix: 61; as the Almighty Lecturer, viii: 56; on the allegory of God as the potter, ix: 307; barriers between man and, vi: 69; belief in God the first article of every creed, viii: 301; can be discovered only by reason, viii: 45; Christian religion derogatory to, ix: *295*; Creation is the Word of God, viii: *41*, ix: *275*; a definition of, ix: 10; did not create men enemies, iii: 58; his existence sufficiently demonstrated, viii: *275*; known only through his works, viii: *280*; may be pleased with variety of devotions, vii: 103; the Old Testament idea of, ix: 201; Paine has but one God, viii: 305; relation of God and man, vi: 152, viii: 39; may be studied through his works, ix: *2*; universal article of religion, ix: 19
Godwin, William, aids publication of "Rights of Man," i: *230*
Goldsmith, Oliver, Paine's letter to (*21* Dec. *1772*), i: 9, x: 347; epitaph on Whitfoord, x: 347
GOOD, PUBLIC, iv: 53
Preface, iv: 51
Gospels, the selection of the, ix: 147
Gothic, the lord of the manor, ii: 50
GOVERNMENT, ON (Dissertations), iv: *221*
Preface, iv: *219*
GOVERNMENT, DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF, v: *207*
GOVERNMENT, ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF (Common Sense), ii: 97
GOVERNMENT, OF THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF (Rights of Man, II), vi: *255*
GOVERNMENT, The Society for Political Inquiries, iv: 311; the ad-

GOVERNMENT, (continued)
ministrative system, v: 29; analysis of the American government, iii: 186; by a single person vicious in itself, vii: 275; cost of representative, vii: 47; delegated powers, iii: 190; experience in government yet lacking, vi: 307; foundation of the English, x: 245; general happiness should be only object of, vii: 2; hereditary and representative, x: 218; duty of a government to its citizens, v: 108; the meaning of "republic," vi: 268; not built on principles of civilization, vii: 3; the object of, vi: 305; Paine proposes a Federal government, v: 141; regulations of prices, v: 58; the right of every nation to enjoy its own, vii: 221; should not be dependent upon an individual, vi: 311; should protect all religions, ii: 162; the two modes of, vi: 199; the two systems of, vi: 256; the powers of, v: 19; the three sources of, vi: 72; war profitable to, vi: 208

Government in America, the present time fit for forming a, ii: 162; project for a, ii: 144

Government, hereditary, is always tyranny, vi: 257; as cause of war, vi: 262

Government, by precedent, a vile system, vi: 302

GOVERNMENTS AND CHARTERS, CONSTITUTIONS, x: 235

GOVERNMENTS, OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD (Rights of Man, II), vi: 249

Grave, Paine's directions concerning his, x: 295

Gravitation, the nature of, ix: 6

GREAT BRITAIN

British Army, cost of feeding the, iii: 181
Quakers act as, spies for the, i: 56

British Government, affair of the Regency, vi: 182; cabinet determined on war, iv: 129; defects of, vii: 17; founded by Norman Conquest, x: 245; hostility to Republican party in the United States, x: 79; Jay's treaty with, x: 160; national debt, ii: 153, iv: 364; Pennsylvania constitution copied from, x: 255; Popish practices of the, ii: 83; subsidy to Presbyterian Ministers, viii: 304; regulation of trade with America, i: 206

British Navy, the value of the, ii: 153; Fleet, the, iv: 206

British Politics, asks mediation of Spain, iii: 200; Commissioners the (1778) Bills of conciliation sent to, iv: 150; Commissioners return to England, iii: 92; Commissioners at New York letter to, iii: 47; conquest the hope of, ii: 336; during the campaigns of Marlborough, ii: 302; exposed to devastation, iii: 51; not served by foreign alliance, iv: 338; opinion of French Revolution (1789), i: 212; policies defects of, iv: 200; Politics in, iii: 70; rejects Spanish mediation (1779), iv: 178; Russian embargo against, x: 87; the British in India, ii: 1; the ill policy of holding Gibraltar, iv: 203; the state of politics in (1789), i: 204, iv: 370; tries to divide France and America, iii: 197; John Jay's unsatisfactory treaty with, x: 83

England in General, at the Norman conquest, v: 21, vi: 250; fear of a Revolution in, vii: 294; heavy taxation in, iii: 132; ignorance of finance, i: 208; in danger from credit, iv: 340; in fear of France, iii: 59; letter to the people of, iii: 65; manufactures in, iv: 352; national debt of, ii: 153, iv: 364; people, no advantage for, in conquest of America, ii: 86; Paine's opinion of, i: 219; Paine's visit to (1787), i: 168; Press, Thomas Jefferson on the, x: 287; settlements in Canada, iv: 201; statistics of the population of, x: 22; total reform needed in, iv: 196

Wars of England, always defeated royalist France, ix: 28; cabinet determined on war, iv: 129; clemency, an instance of, iii: 170; declares war on France, x: 68, i: 174; dispute with Spain (1790), i: 224; meditated wars, x: 64; most interested in the French Revolution, viii: 93; open to invasion, x: 226; Revolution of 1688, vii: 43; Royalist France, always defeated, ix: 28; war with Holland, iv: 190; wars of, ii: 326, x: 220

GREAT REPUBLIC, HAIL (Poem), x: 319

Greeks, of learning among the, viii: 58

Greeks and Romans, America excels, iii: 35; had spirit but lacked principle of liberty, iii: 34

Greene, Col. Christopher, goes with Paine to visit forts at Mud Island, iii: 271
GREENE, GENERAL NATHANAEL dissuades Paine from trip to England, vii: 20; at Fort Lee, ii: 267; his friendship for Paine, iii: 268; Paine's letter to (9 Sept. 1780), i: 117
Grenadas, legal status of the, iii: 88
Grenville, Lord, his eulogy of the English Constitution, vii: 191; defence of Jay's Treaty, v: 183; his relations with John Jay, v: 170
Ground-rent, every proprietor owes, x: 12
Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, prevents duelling, ii: 62

H

HAIL GREAT REPUBLIC (*Poem*), x: 319
Halifax, useless to Britain, iv: 203
HALL, JOHN, assists Paine with models (1786), i: 156; helps Paine construct models (1783); i: 142; letter of introduction to Franklin (1786), i: 156; letter concerning Burke's pension, vi: 163
Hall, Robert, remarks on R. Hall's Sermon (Prospect Papers), ix: 83
HAMILTON, ALEXANDER, on communion administered to, ix: 126; on his conversation with John Mason, ix: 131; on the rights of mankind, v: 221
Hanging of Captain Huddy, iii: 212
Hanover, the House of, French objections to, x: 67; the importation of the kings from, vii: 90
Happiness, in old age, viii: 177
Harmony, exists in Nature, and not in the Bible, ix: 141
Haslewood, Commodore, proposes to burn British boats, iii: 275
Health, The Board of, essay addressed to, x: 273
Hebrew, the language of Christ, viii: 42
Henry IV of France, plan to abolish war, vi: 207
Hereditary authorship, vi: 264
Hereditary government, is always tyranny, vi: 257; and representative government, x: 218
Hereditary Kingship, injustice of, vi: 169
Hereditary Royalty, absurd and disgusting, vii: 276
HEREDITARY SUCCESSION, OF MONARCHY AND (Common Sense), ii: 107
Hereditary Succession, the absurdity of, vii: 141; never founded on right, vii: 117
Herodotus, the voyages of, ix: 120
Hesse, the Landgrave of, his sale of his subjects, vii: 295
Hessians, surprise of three regiments of, iii: 261
Hilkiah, the priest, and the book of Moses, ix: 71; forges the books of Moses, ix: 18
Hillsborough, Lord, letter to Lord Bottetourt, quoted, iv: 87
HINTS TOWARD FORMING A SOCIETY FOR INQUIRING INTO THE TRUTH OR FALSEHOOD OF ANCIENT HISTORY, SO FAR AS HISTORY IS CONNECTED WITH SYSTEMS OF RELIGION ANCIENT AND MODERN (Prospect Paper), ix: 118
HINTS, USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING, ii: 25
HISTORY, A SOCIETY FOR INQUIRING INTO (Prospect Papers), ix: 118
HISTORY, CHRISTIANITY AND EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 58
History of the Revolution, too soon to write the, iv: 117
Holcroft, Thomas, aids publication of "Rights of Man," i: 230
Holy Books, the origin of various, viii: 7
HOLLAND, British war against, iv: 190; cost of Charles' II war with, vii: 44; English Navigation Act directed against, iv: 329; protest against war with, iv: 317; the situation of, iv: 372; the stadtholder of, iv: 331
Hollis, Thomas Brand, aids publication of "Rights of Man," i: 230
"Honest Politician," paid by Gérard, i: 88
Honor, National, a cause of war, iii: 77
Honorable, the title of, ii: 65
Horse, Alexander the great as a, ii: 36
Hortalez and Co., Roderigue, the firm of, i: 90
Houdon, his bust of Washington, i: 234

House of Lords, the origin of, x: 257
HOWE, AN ADDRESS TO LORD (Poem) x: 315
HOWE, TO LORD (Crisis, II), ii: 279
Howe, George Augustus, monument to, ii: 281
HOWE, LORD, and General Howe, British Commissioners (1778), iv: 150; his proclamation, i: 41; his proclamation, quoted, ii: 282; invitation to Members of Congress, ii: 283; order to hang civilians in arms, ii: 293
Howe, Sir William, letter to, iii: 1; takes Philadelphia (1777), i: 49
Huddy, Captain, the murder of, iii: 212
Human Sacrifice, Christianity founded on, ix: 134, 295
"Humanus," signature of Thomas Paine, ii: 2
Hutchinson, Governor, ii: 13; his "History of New England" quoted, iv: 73
HYMEN, CUPID AND, ii: 49
Hysteria, religious, ix: 160

I

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, the, ix: 102, 129; doctrine of the, viii: 218, 225; supposed prophecy of the, viii: 183
Imprimateur, the office of, x: 289
Imprisonment of Thomas Paine, v: 73; his memorial to James Monroe, complaining of, v: 77
Income Tax, Paine proposes, vii: 71
INDEPENDENCE, America's natural right, ii: 306; of America, true interest of Britain, iii: 93; Quakers should approve, ii: 328; American, earl of Shelburne on, iii: 220; suggested by Spain to Britain, iii: 200
Independence, Declaration of, see Declaration of Independence
INDIA, British cruelties in, iii: 69; Britain's reduction of, iii: 25; Lord Clive in, ii: 39
Indians, American, the women of the, ii: 87; lands reserved to, iv: 85; the Osage, on a Bible presented to, ix: 111; Paine appointed to make treaty with (1777), i: 42
Indians Frontiers, expenses of, vii: 147
Infant damnation, ix: 115
Infidelity, see Atheism
Information against Paine, the (1792), i: 266
Inhabitants, of other planets, viii: 84
INTELLIGENCE, RELIGIOUS (Prospect Papers), ix: 159
INQUIRIES, THE SOCIETY FOR POLITICAL, iv: 311
INTRODUCING A LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL, iv: 111
INTRODUCTION (Rights of Man, II), vi: 231
INVASION OF ENGLAND, TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND ON THE, x: 217
Inventor, Thomas Paine as, v: 1
IRON BRIDGE, THE, x: 189
IRON BRIDGES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF, x: 203
Iron, the uses of, ii: 30; on the corrosion of, x: 201
Isaiah, his supposed prophecy of the birth of Christ, viii: 183; ix: 214

J

James II, King, debasement of coinage by, iv: 298; the expulsion of, vi: 24
Jamieson, Lieutenant-Colonel, André taken before, iii: 154
Jasher, the Book of, viii: 327
JAY AND GÉRARD, MESSRS., DEANE, iii: 351
JAY, JOHN, defects of his treaty, v: 199; first account of Jay's treaty, v: 177; his conduct in England, v: 170; letter attacking Silas Deane, iii: 351; proposes Senate appointed for life, v: 149; supports Deane in controversy, i: 72; suspected of suppressing Paine's letters to Congress, i: 81; treaty with England, x: 160
JEFFERSON, THOMAS,
LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON IN PARIS, v: 7
PRIVATE LETTERS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON,
I. (Apr. 20, 1793), v: 49
II. (Oct. 20, 1793), v: 52
PRIVATE LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON (1 Oct. 1800), x: 81; asks Paine to sit for his portrait, i: 169; disregard of patronage, x: 254; Federalist injustice to, x: 173

JEFFERSON, THOMAS, (*continued*)
Letter to Benjamin Vaughan (quoted) (2 July 1787), i: 168;
G. Morris' letter to (21 Jan. 1794), i: 343;
(6 March 1794), i: 345;
on the British Press, x: 287;
Paine meets him in Paris, i: 167;
Paine's letter to (1787), quoted, i: 169;
Paine's letter to (1788), i: 175;
Paine's letter to (9 Sept. 1788), i: 194;
(15 Sept. 1788), i: 199;
(16 Dec. 1788), i: 199;
(15 Jan. 1789), i: 200;
(16 Feb. 1789), i: 201;
(12 Mar. 1789), i: 204;
(10 Apr. 1789), i: 206;
(17 June 1789), i: 209;
(13 July 1789), i: 191;
(15 Sept. 1789), i: 211;
(18 Sept. 1789), i: 211;
(20 Apr. 1793), i: 310;
(25 Dec. 1802), x: 93;
(1 Jan. 1805), i: 429
on the British Press, x: 287; resigns as Secretary of State, i: 355
Jeremiah, the book of, viii: 187; the supposed prophecies of, ix: 222
Jerseys, affairs in the (1777), i: 43
JESUS CHRIST, AN APPRECIATION OF THE CHARACTER OF, ETC., viii: 11
JESUS, Jewish accusations against, viii: 14; betrayed by Judas, viii: 33; crucifixion of, viii: 226; genealogy of, viii: 222; never mentions the fall of man, ix: 104; his obscure origin, viii: 33; supposed prophecies of the birth of, viii: 183, 226; ix: 214; viii: 226
Jewish accusations against Jesus, viii: 14
Jewish Kings, the, ii: 82
Jewish names, on the occurrence of, ix: 50
JEWS, in the Exodus, ii: 79; most ignorant race, ix: 62; they request a king, ii: 109
JOB, the Book of, ix: 52, viii: 170; Gentile origin of the, viii: 171; not a Jewish name, ix: 52
JOHN, THE BOOK OF (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 263
Johnson, prints "Rights of Man," i: 230
Johnstone, Governor, accusation of bribery, iv: 14; his activities in America, iv: 9
Jonah, the Book of, viii: 208; and the whale, viii: 95
Jones, Captain John Paul, his foray on English coast, iii: 103; his plan to capture St. Helens, v: 120
JORDAN, CAMILLE, A LETTER TO, ix: 17
Jordan, Camille, his report quoted, ix: 29
Jordan, J. S., Prints "Rights of Man, II," i: 230, 263; prosecution of, vii: 131
JOSHUA, and the angel, viii: 166; as author of book of Joshua, viii: 139; and the sun and moon, viii: 142
Judas Iscariot, his betrayal of Jesus, viii: 33
Judges, the Book of, viii: 145
Judges, tenure of, x: 267
Judgment, the Last, according to Matthew, ix: 304
Jupiter, and the countryman, fable of, i: 296; and the Giants, viii: 14
Juries, special, the nature of, viii: 340; history and nature of, vii: 225
JUSTICE, AGRARIAN, Author's Inscription, x: 1
Author's English Preface, x: 7
Agrarian Justice, x: 9

K

King, a king offers himself to America, vi: 90; the power of the, ii: 104
King of America, the, ii: 147
King of England, "Like a fish," i: 43; his speech, iii: 159
"King of Prussia" privateer, Paine engages in the, i: 7; vii: 17
KINGS, a conspiracy of kings, vii: 292; Paine not personally hostile to, vii: 129; and subjects, distinction of
KINGS, (*continued*)
men into, ii: 108; their expenses and those of Geo. Washington, vi: 278
Kings, the two books of, viii: 153
Kingship, despotism of hereditary, vi: 169
Kirkbride, Col. Joseph, Paine's neighbor at Bordentown (1783), i: 142
Knowles, Rev. William, Schoolmaster of Paine, vii: 16

L

LAFAYETTE, M. DE declaration of rights by, vi: 43; farewell to Congress, vi: 29; informs Paine of the King's flight, i: 242; proposals for a declaration of rights, vi: 27; sends key of Bastille to Washington, i: 221

Lalande (the astronomer), and Masonry, ix: 187

Lambert, Mary, Paine marries (1759), i: 7; Mary dies, 1760, i: 7

Lancaster, the wars of York and, ii: 120

Land, the property of all men in common, x: 11; Agrarian Justice, x: 1

Language, the barrier of, viii: 42; dead languages are become useless, viii: 59

Lansdowne, the Marquis of, i: 197; his coolness with Paine, i: 206, v: 13

Lanthenas' letter to De Thionville (7 Aug. 1794), i: 368

Lauderdale, Charles II, and, vii: 278

LAURENS, HENRY, Paine asks loan from, i: 98; letter to Sir Henry Clinton, iv: 160; Paine's letter to (17 Jan., 1779), i: 82; Paine's letter to (Dec. 15, 1778), i: 72; Paine's letter to (14 Sept. 1779), i: 96; resigns as President of Congress, iii: 291

LAURENS, COL. JOHN, brings captured letters, iii: 204; Paine goes to France with (1781), i: 121; Paine's letter to (4 Oct. 1781), i: 123; Paine's trip to France with, iv: 248

Law, lawyers' law and legislative law, x: 266; on the nature of laws, iv: 235; retrospective laws, iv: 242

"Law of Nations," only prevented by death of Russian Emperor, x: 170

Learning, among the Greeks, viii: 58

Lebon, Joseph (Paine's alternate in convention), executed, x: 120

Ledyard, John (American traveller), the death of, i: 210

Lee, Arthur, defense of, iii: 344; Vergenne's distrust of, i: 59

Lee, Arthur, Vergennes' distrust of, i: 59

Lee, General Charles, on military plans of 1776, x: 123; captured at Baskinridge, iii: 260

Lee, Col. R. H., Paine's friendship on, iii: 340; Paine's letter to (Oct. 30, 1777), i: 44

Lee, William, Alderman of London, iii: 299, iii: 343

Lee, Fort, evacuation of, iii: 257

Lees, Deane's charges against the, iii: 282

Legal terminology, reform of, x: 264

LEGISLATION, Franklin's opinion of two legislative bodies, x: 271; on a single chamber, v: 24; that laws should expire in thirty years, iv: 273

LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POWERS, ANSWERS TO FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE, v: 15

Legislative reform, vii: 260

Legislature, project for, v: 26.

Leland, "History of Ireland," quoted, iv: 298

Lemuel, the proverbs of, viii: 172

LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL, INTRODUCING A, iv: 111

LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL, iv: 117

LETTERS TO ONSLOW CRANLEY,
I London, June 17, 1792, vii: 159
II London, June 21, 1792, vii: 166

LETTER TO ANDREW DEAN, A, ix: 293

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS OF THE LATE PROCLAMATION, vii: 185

LETTER TO CAMILLE JORDAN, ix: 17

LETTERS CONCERNING, "THE AGE OF REASON,"
I An Answer to a Friend, viii: 287
II Correspondence with The Hon. Samuel Adams, viii: 295

LETTER ON THE FEMALE SEX, AN OCCASIONAL, ii: 85

LETTER TO DANTON, v: 55

LETTERS, THE FORESTER'S, *see* FORESTER'S LETTERS, THE

LETTER TO FRANKLIN IN PARIS, iii: 263

LETTER TO JEFFERSON, PRIVATE (1 Oct, 1800), x: 81

LETTERS TO JEFFERSON, PRIVATE, v: 49

LETTERS:
Audibert to Thuriot (20 Aug. 1794), i: 373
Burgoyne to Lord George Germaine, i: 47
Deane to Morris (Dec. 20, 1777), i: 58
Deforgues to G. Morris (Feb. 1794), i: 350
Elmer to Paine (11 Dec. 1802), i: 424
Franklin's letter introducing Paine to Richard Bache, i: 17

LETTERS, (*continued*)
Franklin to Paine (Sept. 27, 1775), i: 25
Franklin to Paine (Sept. 24, 1785), i: 153
Gérard to Vergennes (17 Jan. 1780), i: 85
Jefferson to Paine (March 18, 1801), x: 171
Jefferson to Benjamin Vaughn (2 July 1787), quoted, i: 168
Laurens, Henry, to Sir Henry Clinton (June 6, 1778), iv: 160
Madison to Washington (2 July 1784), i: 149
Monroe to Payne (Paris Sept. 18, 1794), v: 157
Monroe to Randolph (7 Nov. 1794), i: 381
Morris, Gouverneur to Deforgues (14 Feb. 1794), i: 349
Morris, Gouverneur to Jefferson (21 Jan. 1794), i: 343
Morris, Gouverneur to Jefferson (6 March 1794), i: 345
Morris, Gouverneur to John Randolph (20 Jan. 1812), i: 89
Lord Onslow Cranley to the inhabitants of Surrey, vii: 159
Paine to Samuel Adams (6 Mar. 1795), i: 391
Paine to anonymous friend (16 Apr. 1790), i: 215; (undated), i: 219
Paine to Barrère (5 Sept. 1793), i: 335
Paine to William Bingham (1777), i: 43
Paine to Mme. Bonneville (15 Nov. 1802), i: 422
Paine to Chairman of Society for Constitutional Information (12 May 1792), i: 273
Paine to Committee of Public Safety (France), i: 369
Paine to George Clymer (19 Nov. 1786), i: 161
Paine to George Clymer (15 August 1787), i: 170
Paine to George Clymer (29 Dec. 1787), i: 172
Paine to Congress (30 Apr. 1779), i: 84
Paine to Danton (6 May 1793), i: 304
Paine to Dundas (Calais Sept. 15, 1792), vii: 179
Paine to Dundas (6 Oct. 1792), vii: 137
Paine to Executive Council, Pennsylvania (11 Oct. 1779), i: 101

LETTERS, (*continued*)
Paine to John Fellows (19 July 1805), i: 447; (31 July 1805), i: 432
Paine to Franklin (28 May 1781), i: 122
Paine to Franklin (23 Sept. 1785), i: 153
Paine to Franklin (31 Dec. 1785), i: 155
Paine to Franklin (6 June 1786), i: 157
Paine to Franklin (31 March 1787), i: 164
Paine to Hon. Thomas Fitzsimmons (19 May 1786), i: 161
Paine to Hon. Thomas Fitzsimmons (19 Nov. 1786), i: 158
Paine to Goldsmith, x: 347
Paine to Gen. Nathaniel Greene (9 Sept. 1780), i: 117
Paine to T. Jefferson, v: 49
Paine to Jefferson (1787), quoted, i: 169
Paine to Jefferson in Paris, v: 7
Paine to Jefferson (15 Jan. 1784), i: 201
Paine to Jefferson (1788), i: 175
Paine to Jefferson (17 June 1788), i: 209
Paine to Jefferson (9 Sept. 1788), i: 194
Paine to Jefferson (15 Sept. 1788), i: 199
Paine to Jefferson (16 Dec. 1788), i: 199
Paine to Jefferson (12 Mar. 1789), i: 204
Paine to Jefferson (10 Apr. 1789), i: 206
Paine to Jefferson (17 June 1789), i: 209
Paine to Jefferson (13 July 1789), i: 191
Paine to Jefferson (15 Sept. 1789), i: 211
Paine to Jefferson (18 Sept. 1789), i: 211
Paine to Jefferson (20 Apr. 1793), i: 310
Paine to Jefferson (Oct. 1, 1800), x: 81
Paine to Jefferson (Dec. 25, 1802), x: 93
Paine to Jefferson (1 Jan. 1805), i: 429
Pains to H. Laurens (11 Apr. 1778), i: 51
Paine to H. Laurens (15 Dec. 1778), i: 72

LETTERS, (*continued*)
Paine to H. Laurens (17 Jan. 1779), i: 82
Paine to H. Laurens (14 Sept. 1779), i: 96
Paine to John Laurens (4 Oct. 1781), i: 123
Paine to R. H. Lee (30 Oct. 1777), i: 44
Paine to Sir Archibald Macdonald (May 1792), vii: 131
Paine to member of Pennsylvania Council (1786), i: 158
Paine to Gouverneur Morris (24 Feb. 1794), i: 354
Paine to Monroe (letter suggested, to apply for his liberation), v: 130
Paine to Monroe (4 Oct. 1794), v: 99
Paine to Monroe (13 Oct. 1794), v: 103
Paine to Monroe (undated), v: 115
Paine to Monroe (20 Oct. 1794), v: 117
Paine to Monroe (2 Nov. 1794), v: 137
Paine to Robert Morris (20 Feb. 1782), i: 133
Paine to Kitty Nicholson (6 Jan. 1789), i: 178
Paine to Joseph Reed (4 June 1780), i: 108
Paine to Sheriff of the county of Sussex, vii: 173
Paine to Skipwith (1 Mar. 1804), i: 426
Paine to the Citizens of the U. S. (Published in the National Intelligencer)
I, x: 95
II, x: 103
III, x: 115
IV, x: 125
V, x: 135
VI, x: 143
VII, x: 159
Paine to Washington
(5 June 1778), i: 59
(30 Nov. 1781), i: 129
(7 Sept. 1782), i: 138
(7 Sept. 1782), iv: 213
(10 Sept. 1783), i: 145
(1 May 1790), i: 221
(31 May 1791), i: 223
(21 July 1791), i: 236
(13 Feb. 1792), i: 260
(Paris, 22 Feb. 1795), v: 168
(20 Sept. 1795), v: 166
(Paris, 30 July 1796), v: 139
Paine to Jonathan Williams (26 Nov. 1781), i: 125

LETTERS, (*continued*)
Rev. George Scott to Col. William McFarran, ix: 160
Sir George Staunton Bart. (1789), x: 189
Washington to the Committee of Safety, v: 185
Washington to Paine (18 Sept. 1782), i: 139; iv: 216
Washington to Paine (10 Sept. 1783), i: 144; vii: 19
Washington to Paine (19 Sept. 1783), i: 144
Washington to Paine (6 May 1792), i: 239
Washington to Joseph Reed (28 May 1780), quoted, i: 107
Lettres de cachet, French Parliament served with, vi: 127; nobles in favor of, vi: 124
Lexington, the battle of, i: 26, ii: 124
LEWES, the meeting at, i: 270; Paine's life at, vii: 174; Paine's house restored (1922), i: 8; Paine takes up residence at, i: 8
LIBERTY TREE (Poem), x: 312
Liberty, of the Press, x: 287; the origin of, ii: 81
LIFE AND DEATH OF LORD CLIVE, REFLECTIONS ON THE, ii: 39
LIFE IN A PLURALITY OF WORLDS, ADVANTAGES OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 83
Lightfoot, Hannah, ii: 341
Literary Property, the protection of, iv: 113
Literature, The Magazine in America, ii: 17; promotes unity of mankind, iv: 167
LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD, FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR TO THE (Lady Robert Smyth to Thomas Paine), v: 301
LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD, FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR TO THE (Poem), x: 321
LLANDAFF, THE BISHOP OF, EXTRACTS FROM A REPLY TO, ix: 33
Llandaff, Bishop of (Dr. Richard Watson), "Agrarian Justice" a reply to, x: 7
London Company, the, iv: 59
"Lost Million," G. Morris' account of, i: 89
LORD HOWE, AN ADDRESS TO (Poem), x: 315
LOUISIANA, TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF, x: 177
LOUISIANA BE PURCHASED, PROPOSAL THAT, x: 93

LOUIS XVI
ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI TO TRIAL, vii: 291
REASONS FOR PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET, vii: 299
SHALL LOUIS XVI BE RESPITED?, vii: 309
beheaded, i: 290; beneath notice of Republic, vii: 295; character of, vi: 30; egotism of, vii: 278; his flight from Paris (1791), i: 242; his reception of Paine (1781), i: 121; his secret papers found, i: 284; Paine offers America as asylum to, i: 285, vii: 304; Paine opposes execution of, viii: 303; Paine votes to spare the life of, v: 91; Paine
LOUIS XVI (*continued*)
wishes to save, i: 283; signs the Declaration of the Rights of Man, vi: 60; Vergennes persuades him to aid America, i: 64
Louvett, his appeal to Paine, i: 275
LOVE, WHAT IS? (Poem), x: 323
"Lover of Peace," A signature of Thomas Paine, ii: 84
Lucian, his fable of Jupiter and the countryman, i: 296
Luke, The Book of (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 260
Luxembourg Prison, Paine lodged in the, i: 326, v: 73, viii; narrative of Paine's stay in the, x: 115

M

M'Clenaghan, Mr. Blair, and Robert Morris take subscription for army (1780), i: 107, iv: 252
M'Farren, Col. William, Rev. George Scott's letter to, ix: 160
MACDONALD, SIR ARCHIBALD, British Attorney-General, i: 293; Paine's letters to, i: 294; (11 Nov. 1792), vii: 285
M'Leod, Death of, ii: 198, 211
Madison, James, Letter to Washington (2 July 1784), i: 149
MAGAZINE IN AMERICA, THE, ii: 17
Magna Charta, vi: 295
Maimonides, on the book of Genesis, ix: 39
Malouet, destroys the Republican Manifesto, vii: 302
Malta, the cause of war, x: 221
MAN, DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF (FRANCE), vi: 145
Man, The Fall of, viii: 318; allegory of the, ix: 34
Man, The Rights of, *see* Rights of Man, The
MANIFESTO, A REPUBLICAN, vii: 122
Manifesto to foreign courts, Paine advises a, ii: 167
MANKIND barriers between mankind and God, vi: 69; can always understand their true interest, vi: 216; character of, vi: 240; their curiosity, iv: 161; defining the duty of mankind, vi: 69; genius dormant in, vi: 264; literature promotes unity of, iv: 167; love of caricature, iv: 184; primitive state of, x: 9; relation of God and mankind, vi: 152; religions all founded on unity of,
MANKIND (*continued*)
vi: 68; the slave and tyrant of woman, ii: 85; three principles of imposition upon, viii: 88; true relation of mankind to God, viii: 39
Manufactures, in England, iv: 352
Manuscript, of the Rights of Man, vii: 109
MARAT, JEAN PAUL, his clash with Paine, v: 91; his hostility to Paine, i: 303; killed by Charlotte Corday, i: 314; opposes Paine, i: 287
Maritime Compact, x: 161
Mark, The Book of (Examination of the Prophecies), ix: 255
MARK, CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES BETWEEN MATTHEW AND (Author's Preface), ix: 299
MARRIAGES, REFLECTIONS ON UNHAPPY, ii: 73
Marsh gas, Paine's experiments with, x: 278
Mary, The Virgin, viii: 9
Maryland, advantages from tobacco culture, iv: 53
Marriage, a letter on, i: 178
MASON, TO JOHN (Prospect Papers), ix: 131
"Masonry Dissected" (by Samuel Pritchard) quoted, ix: 167
Massachusetts Bay, revolt of the people of, ii: 13
Massacre, The Boston, iv: 125
Massacre at St. Vincent's, the, ii: 295
Massanello, ii: 148
Matter, the properties of, ix: 5
MATTHEW AND MARK, CONTRADICTORY, DOCTRINES BETWEEN (Author's Preface), ix: 299
Matthew, Gospel of, ix: 212

Mediation, Spain proposes mediation (1779), iv: 178
"Member of the Deistical Church, A," Signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 130
"Member of the Deistical Congregation, A,"—Signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 137
MEMOIR TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES (The Construction of Iron Bridges), x: 203
Memorial of the people of Louisiana to Congress, Paine's answer to, x: 177
MEMORIAL TO JAMES MONROE, v: 77
Memorial to Congress, Paine's, in the Deane case, i: 75
Memorial to Congress, Paine's second, in the Dean case, i: 77
Memorial, presented to the council of Safety (Penna.), ii: 344
Mendez, Capt., i: 7
Merchants' Bank, the affair of the, x: 240, 241
MESSRS. DEANE, JAY AND GÉRARD, iii: 351
Mexico, the mines of, iv: 327
Middleton, Dr. Congress, terms creation a revelation, ix: 276
Mifflin, General, declines to lead defence of Philadelphia, iii: 266
Mifflin, Fort, Paine under fire at, i: 41
Milbank, his opinion of Paine's bridge over the Wear, x: 210
Militia, America trusted to, ii: 271
Miller, Professor, on women under barbarism, ii: 86
Miller, Sylvanus, attests will of Paine, x: 291
Mind, the three faculties of the, ix: 192
Mines of Peru and Mexico, basis of alliance of France and Spain, iv: 327
Mining, in encouragement of, ii: 31
Ministers, subsidy to dissenting, vii: 248
Ministry, policy of the British, iii: 74
Minors, on the rights of, v: 214
MIRACLE, the nature of, viii: 90; we cannot expect, ii: 79; of the Christian church, ix: 73; related by pagan writers, viii: 117
Mirales, M. de, concerned in offer of bribe to Paine, i: 87
MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER, vi: 157
MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS, vii: 116
MISSIONARY SOCIETY, TO THE MEMBERS OF THE (Prospect Papers), ix: 111
MISSIONS AND REVELATIONS, CONCERNING (Age of Reason, I), viii: 6
"Mob," the, vi: 51
MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION, OF (Common Sense), ii: 107
MONARCHY, AN ESSAY FOR THE USE OF NEW REPUBLICANS IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO, vii: 271; *MONARCHY,* its character in France, vii: 306; France not really a, vii: 117; a master fraud, vi: 315; prophecy of the early fall of, vi: 226
Monarch and Royalty, distinctions between, vii: 273
"Moniteur, Le" (Paris), Paine's statement in, i: 248
MONROE, JAMES, MEMORIAL ADDRESSED TO, v: 77
MONROE, THE RECALL OF, x: 77
Monroe, James, appointed as Minister to France, v: 185; his letter to Paine (18 Sept. 1794), v: 157; his letter to Judge Jones (15 Sept. 1795), i: 387; his letter to Randolph (7 Nov. 1794), i: 381
Monroe doctrine, Paine foreshadows the, i: 429
MONTGOMERY, GENERAL, AND AN AMERICAN DELEGATE, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN, ii: 251
Montgomery, oration in Memory of General Montgomery by Cato, rejected, ii: 210
Monument to Thomas Paine, i: 457
Moon, the changes of the, ix: 66
MOORE, BISHOP OF NEW YORK, To (Prospect Papers), ix: 126
Moores' Creek Bridge (*N. C.*), Battle of, ii: 198, 211
Moreh Nebuchim (of Maimonides) quoted, ix: 39
Morgan, J. Pierpont, Paine letter in collection of, i: 261
MORRIS, GOUVERNEUR, claims Paine is French Citizen, i: 343; collusion with Deforgues, i: 351; his connection with the Deane affair, i: 89; deceived by Silas Deane, x: 128; Deforgues' letter to (19 Feb., 1794), i: 350; dislike of Paine, i: 234, v: 85; his dislike of Barrère, i: 335; his jealousy of Paine, i: 330; letter to Robert Morris quoted, i: 334; letter to Deforgues (14 Feb. 1794), i: 349; letter to Jefferson (21 Jan. 1794), i: 343; letter to Jefferson (6 March 1794), i: 345; letter to John Randolph (20 Jan. 1812), i: 89; Paine's letter to (24 Feb. 1794), i: 354; Paine's letter concerning, i: 335; Paine opposes him as Minister to France, v: 169; his resemblance to Washington, i: 234; sent to England by Washington, i: 235; sent to Lon-

MORRIS, GOUVERNEUR, (*continued*)
don, v: 163; tries to abrogate treaty with France, i: 331
MORRIS, ROBERT, conference with Washington and Paine (1782), i: 137; and the accounts of Thomas Morris, iii: 330; Deane's letter to (Dec. 20, 1777), i: 58; Paine's letter to (20 Feb., 1782), i:133; subscribes for Army, iv: 253; with others, founds the Bank of North America, i: 107
Morristown, Washington at (1780), i: 106
Morton, Walter, legatee of Paine, x: 293
MOSES, and the ten commandments, viii: 8; the five books of, authenticity of, viii: 118; the book of Hilkiah and, ix: 71; the horrid character of, viii: 133; the law of, ix: 183; not mentioned by Herodotus, ix: 120; on the books of, ix: 17; not mentioned from Joshua to II Kings, ix: 44
Motion, not a property of matter, ix: 6
Mud Island, defence of, iii: 21
"Mountain," the, i: 302
MULTIPLICITY OF RELIGIONS, CONCERNING THE (Age of Reason, I), viii: 86
MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE, ix: 303
Mystery, The nature of, viii: 88; religion must be free from, viii: 90

N

NAMES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS, OF THE, ix: 46
Names, on the occurrence of Jewish, ix: 50
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, and the Abbé Sieyès, vii: 127; the character of, x: 225; England's challenge to, x: 222
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, (France) character of the, vi: 109; conspiracy against, vi: 140; description of, vi: 110; formation of, vi: 136; might call convention of all nations, v: 39; orders church property sold, vi: 197; plot against, vi: 48; volume of business transacted by, v: 33
NATIONAL CONVENTION (France) adopts decimal division of time, ix: 69; Paine elected member of, i: 274; Paine's letter from prison to, v: 119
NATIONAL DEBTS, Adam Smith, on, v: 256; national debt of France, iv: 364; of England, ii: 153, iii: 83; iv: 364; Wm. Pitt's plan for funding the, iv: 360, iv: 365; taxes applied to, vii: 41; taxing the stock of the, vii: 88; to refund U. S. debt, iv: 55
"National Intelligencer," letters published in, x: 95
Nations, Association of, Paine proposes, x: 160
Natural Philosophy, and miracles, viii: 93; effects of study of, iii: 113
Nature, the finest subject of religious contemplation, ix: 114; the true Bible, ix: 2
"Naval History," (*Entic*) quoted, ii: 153; naval resources of America, ii: 159
Navigation Act, the English, iv: 329
NAVY, cost of building a, ii: 153; fleets of England and France, iv: 206, x: 73; Paine suggests sale of the U. S. Navy, iii: 133; value of the British fleet, ii: 153
Negotiation and Agency, acts of, iv: 235
Nehemiah, the book of, viii: 169
Neutral Nations, the rights of, x: 162
Neutrality, the armed, x: 74
NEW ANECDOTES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT, ii: 34
New England, Plymouth company settles in, iv: 60
NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES, Peace and the,
I June 30th, 1779, iv: 1
II July 14th, 1779, iv: 11
New Jersey, Howe's Campaign against, iii: 12
Newspapers, the character of English, iv: 369
NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT, OF THE OLD AND (Rights of Man, II), vi: 255
New Testament, see Testament, the New
NEWTON, Bishop of Bristol, on the Prophecies, ix: 265
New York Assembly, the petition of the, ii: 165
NEW YORK, the British Commissioners at, see British Commissioners, formation of Constitution of (1777), x: 235; her interest in the fisheries, iv: 7; Howe's campaign against, iii: 10
New York Historical Society, Paine letter in the, i: 82

New York State Legislature, grants Paine the Devoe farm, i: 148
New Orleans, the plan to seize, x: 147
Newport "Mercury," Paine writes for (1782), i: 141
Nicholson, Kitty, Paine's letter to (6 Jan. 1789), i: 178
Nobility conferred by government, is counterfeit, v: 229; the evil of, vii: 280
Nootka Sound, the affair of, vii: 237
North America, the Bank of, see Bank of North America
NORTH, LORD, Bills presented by (1778), iv: 150; arrival of his motion in America, ii: 331; his bill, of conciliation (1778), iv: 150; his character, iii: 82
North Virginia Company, the, iv: 59

O

Oath of Allegiance, to nation alone in America, vi: 319
Obscenity in faith, a token of imposture, viii: 219
OBSERVATIONS (encouraging France to maintain a state of war), v: 203; observations on the Declaration of Rights, vi: 151
OCCASIONAL LETTER ON THE FEMALE SEX, AN, ii: 85
OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (Prospect Papers), ix: 146
OF CAIN AND ABEL (Prospect Papers), ix: 93
OF MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION (Common Sense), ii: 107
OF THE NAMES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS, ix: 46
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (Age of Reason, I), viii: 31
OF THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT (Rights of Man, II), vi: 255
OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT (Prospect Papers), ix: 116
OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD GOVERNMENTS (Rights of Man, II), vi: 249
OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA, ETC., ii: 150
OF THE RELIGION OF DEISM COMPARED WITH THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND THE SUPERIORITY OF THE FORMER OVER THE LATTER (Prospect Papers), ix: 98
OF THE SABBATH DAY IN CONNECTICUT (Prospect Papers), ix: 114
OF SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION (Rights of Man, II), vi: 239
OF THE TRUE THEOLOGY (Age of Reason, I), viii: 19
OF THE WORD "RELIGION" AND OTHER WORDS OF UNCERTAIN SIGNIFICATION (Prospect Papers), ix: 87
OFFICERS OF EXCISE, CASE OF THE, x: 327
O'Hara, General, Paine lends money to, viii: 107; i: 361
OISE, BOURDON DE L', denounces Paine, i: 328; his hostility to Paine, v: 118; accusation against Paine, v: 119
Old Age, happiness in, viii: 177; pensions, Paine proposes, vii: 55
OLD GOVERNMENTS, OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT (Rights of Man, II), vi: 249
Old Testament, see the Old Testament
OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT, OF THE (Rights of Man, II), vi: 255
OLLINE, ELIZABETH, Paine marries (1771), i: 8
OLLINE, SAMUEL, Paine resides with (1768), Paine marries his daughter Elizabeth (1771), i: 8
ON CONSTITUTIONS (Rights of Man, II), vi: 281
ON DEISM, AND THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE (Prospect Papers), ix: 138
ON GOVERNMENT (Dissertations), iv: 221
Preface, iv: 219
ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT, ETC. (Common Sense), ii: 97
ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI TO TRIAL, vii: 291
ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE, THE PLAN AND (Age of Reason, I), viii: 78
ORIGEN, his opinion of Genesis, ix: 38; his view of the book of Job, ix: 53
ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT, ON THE (Common Sense), ii: 97
ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY, ix: 167
ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD GOVERNMENTS, of the (Rights of Man, II), vi: 249
Otto, Louis (French Chargé d'Affaires), letters to his government (4 August 1790) (13 Dec. 1790), i: 226

Pacte Maritime, see Maritime Compact
PAINE, SPECIFICATION OF THOMAS, v: 1
PAINE, THOMAS, ON DEISM AND THE WRITINGS OF, ix: 138
PAINE, THOMAS, THE WILL OF, x: 291
PAINE, THOMAS, ability as inventor, i: 185; accused of Quakerism, vii: 309; accuses Burke of prosecuting "Rights of Man," vii: 135; his acquaintance with Dr. Bevis, R.S., viii: 69; acquaintance with R. H. Lee, iii: 340; a disinterested volunteer, x: 100; advises Burke to propose a national Convention, vii: 104; advises a Declaration for Independence, ii: 166; advises manifesto to foreign courts, ii: 167; aide-de-camp to General Greene, iii: 272; answers to letter on his American Allegiance, v: 85; appointed exciseman (1764), i: 7; appointed in Foreign Department, vii: 18; appointed to make treaty with Indians (1777), i: 42; his appreciation of the book of Jonah, viii: 214; his arrest and imprisonment in France, viii: 105; his arrest in France (1793), i: 325; v: 150; arrives in France (1787), vi: 5; as officer of revenue at Lewes, attempt on his life, i: 428, vii: 174; asserts his enmity to monarchy, vii: 129; asks compensation from Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania (1779), i: 100; asks loan from H. Laurens, i: 98; attacked by Marat, i: 287; Autobiographical sketch, i: 459; the avowed enemy of War, i: 172; in battle of Trenton and Princeton, i: 41; the birth and parentage of, i: 1; his bridge erected in London (1790), i: 227; his bridge over the river Wear, x: 209; the building of his bridge model, x: 191; burlesque of speech in the House of Lords, vii: 194; burned in effigy in England (1792), i: 293; buys house at Bordentown, N. J. (1783), i: 142; called to account by Congress, i: 74; ceases bridge building to write "Rights of Man," x: 209; circumstances of writing of Age of Reason, viii: 302; his citizenship questioned, v: 79; clerk of the Assembly, 1780, iv: 248; collaboration with Condorcet, x: 47; his companions in prison, i: 327; conference with Washington and R. Morris (1780), i: 137; Congress votes $3000 to, i: 147; conversation with Colonel Bayard, iii: 265; conversation with Burke, vii: 238; conversation with Earl of Shelburne, iii: 219; correspondence with Lady Smyth, i: 306; dedicates "Rights of Man" to Washington, i: 230, i: 235; in defence of Mud Island, iii: 21; defends Gen. Washington, x: 122; denies Deane credit for French subsidy, i: 72; denounced by Bourdon de l'Oise, i: 328; denounces African slavery, x: 187; describes his iron bridge, x: 189; a description of, i: 15, 258; description of his house, i: 8; description of his house in Paris, i: 317; his design to visit England (1780), vii: 20; desires to create a new western state, iv: 101; discharged from excise, i: 11; his discourse at the Tribune of the Convention (1793), v: 91; drafts and signs "Act of Pennsylvania Abolishing Slavery" (1780), i: 103; Dumont's characterization of, v: 146; his early education, i: 4; editor of the "Pennsylvania Magazine," i: 18; his efforts to return to America, x: 131; elected clerk of Pennsylvania Assembly (1779), i: 103; elected a member of French National Convention (1792), i: 274; elected to National Convention of France, vii: 179 Eben Elmer's letter to (11 Dec. 1802), i: 424; in England in 1788, vii: 43; first English edition of "Rights of Man," vi: 3; his enlistment for military service, ii: 270; enters the "Terrible" privateer, vii: 16; escapes being hanged by mob, i: 244; escapes capture and shipwreck, x: 132; his essay on Robespierre lot, i: 322; his experiments with marsh gas, x: 278; his father dies (1787), i: 168; his father a Quaker, viii: 68; Federalist injustice to, x: 173; first American abolitionist, i: 20; his first doubts on Christianity, viii: 71; his first writings, i: 9, 327; and the flight of Louis, xvi (1791), i: 242; Franklin's letter to (Sept. 27, 1775); i: 25; Franklin's letter to (24 Sept. 1785), i: 153; Franklin urges him to write history of the American Revolution,

PAINE, THOMAS, (*continued*)
i: 115; French Convention's motion against (1793), viii: 104; his friends in the Convention, i: 303; foreshadows the Monroe doctrine, i: 429; his friends in Paris, i: 319; his friendship with Franklin, i: 24; his friendship with Gen. Nathaniel Greene, iii: 268; his friendship with J. C. Rickman, i: 256; friendship with David Rittenhouse, ii: 207; General confidence in, vii: 19; Gérard's offer to, iii: 355; his gift to the Society for Constitutional Information, i: 272; given French citizenship, v: 82; goes to Mud Island and Red Bank, iii: 271; goes with John Laurens to France (1781), i: 121; Gouveneur Morris, jealousy of, i: 330; granted French citizenship (1792), i: 274; has but one God, viii: 305; heads subscription for the army, iv: 252; hostility of Bourdon de l'Oise, v: 118; his house burned, i: 312; imprisoned in the Luxembourg prison, i: 326, v: 73, 243; the information against, i: 266; interest in conditions in England (1790), i: 229; inventor of the democratic republic, i: 34; invents smokeless candle, i: 154; invents a steamboat, i: 188; invited to return to Convention, viii: 108; Jefferson's letter to (March 18, 1801), x: 171; "Paine jugs," i: 301; last remarks written by, ix: 307; his last illness and death, i: 438; his bones removed to England, i: 456; his monument, i: 457; his MSS. destroyed, i: 404

Paine's letters,

letter to Samuel Adams (March 1795), 1: 391
letter to anonymous friend (16 April 1790), i: 215; undated, i: 219
letter to the Attorney General, i: 294
letter to Barrère (5 Sept. 1793), i: 335
letter to William Bingham, i: 43
letter to Mme. Bonneville (15 Nov. 1802), i: 422
letter to Chairman of "Society for Constitutional Information" (12 May 1792), i: 273
letter of resignation, as Secretary of Committee for Foreign Affairs, i: 78
letter to Committee of Public Safety (8 Aug. 1794), i: 369
letter to George Clymer (19 Nov. 1786), i: 161

PAINE, THOMAS, (*continued*)
letter to George Clymer (15 Aug. 1787), i: 170
letter to George Clymer (29 Dec. 1787), i: 172
letter to Congress (30 April 1779), i: 84
letter to the National Convention, from prison, v: 119
letter to the Council, Pennsylvania (11 Oct. 1779), i: 101
letter to Council of Five Hundred (Jan. 28, 1798), x: 217
letter to Danton (6 May 1793), i: 304
letter to Dundas (Calais, 15 Sept. 1792), vii: 179
letter to John Fellows (19 July 1805), i: 447
letter to John Fellows (31 July 1805); i: 432
letter to Thomas Fitzsimmons (19 May 1786), i: 161
letter to Hon. Thomas Fitzsimmons (19 Nov. 1786), i: 158
letter to Franklin (March 4, 1775), i: 18
letter to Franklin (28 May 1781), i: 122
letter to Franklin (23 Sept. 1785), i: 153
letter to Franklin (31 Dec. 1785), i: 155
letter to Franklin (6 June, 1786), i: 157
letter to Franklin (31 March 1787), i: 164
letter to Oliver Goldsmith, x: 347
letter to Gen. Nathaniel Greene (1 Sept. 1780), i: 117
letter to Jefferson (13 July 1785), i: 191
(13 July 1785), i: 191
letter to Jefferson (1788), i: 175
(1 Sept. 1788), i: 194
(15 Sept. 1788), i: 199
(16 Dec. 1788), i: 199
(15 Jan. 1789), i: 200
(16 Feb. 1789), i: 201
(12 Mar. 1789), i: 204
(10 Apr. 1789), i: 206
(17 June 1789), i: 209
(15 Sept. 1789), i: 211
(18 Sept. 1789), i: 211
(20 April 1793), i: 310
(25 Dec. 1802), x: 93
(1 Jan. 1805), i: 429
letter to Henry Laurens (Apr. 11, 1778), i: 51

PAINE, THOMAS, (*continued*)
letter to Henry Laurens (Dec. 15, 1778), i: 72
letter to Henry Laurens (17 Jan. 1779, i: 82
letter to Henry Laurens (14 Sept. 1779), i: 96
letter to John Laurens (Oct. 4, 1781), i: 123
letter to R. H. Lee (Oct. 30, 1777), i: 44
letter to "Little Corner of the World," v: 301
letter to Robert Morris (20 Feb. 1782), i: 133
letter to Morris (24 Feb. 1794), i: 354
letter to Kitty Nicholson (6 Jan. 1789), i: 178
letter to Joseph Read (4 June 1780), i: 108
letter to Skipwith (1 Mar. 1804), i: 426
letter to Washington (June 5, 1778), i: 54
letter to Washington (30 Nov. 1781), i: 129
letter to Washington (7 Sept 1782), i: 138
(7 Sept. 1782), iv: 213
(10 Sept. 1783), i: 145
(May, 1790), i: 221
(31 May 1790), i: 223
(21 July 1791), i: 236
(13 Feb. 1792), i: 260
(Paris, Sept. 20, 1795), v: 166
(July 30, 1796), v: 139
letter to Jonathan Williams (26 Nov. 1781), i: 125
Letters to Paine:
Jefferson to Paine (March 18, 1801), x: 171
Franklin to Paine (Sept. 27, 1775), i: 25
Franklin to Paine (Sept. 24, 1785), i: 153
Monroe to Paine (18 Sept. 1794), v: 157
Washington to Paine (18 Sept. 1782), i: 139
Washington to Paine (18 Sept. 1782), iv: 216
Washington to Paine (10 Sept. 1783), vii: 19
Washington to Paine (19 Sept. 1783), i: 44
Washington to Paine (6 May, 1792), i: 239
his residence with the Bonnevilles, i: 417; his letters to Congress suppressed, i: 80; his letters and MSS. destroyed by fire (1870), i: 163; letters describing his financial distress (1781), i: 129; liberated from prison, v: 161; his life in London, i: 257; "Life of Thomas Paine," by T. C. Rickman, quoted, i: 257; listed for execution, v: 154; lives in No. 63, Faubourg St. Denis, i: 316; Louvet's appeal to, i: 275; the MSS. of the Rights of Man, vii: 109; Marat's hostility to, i: 303; marries Mary Lambert, i: 7; marries Elizabeth Ollline (1771), i: 8; meeting with Fox, i: 216; his meeting with Lord Stanhope (1790), i: 215; meets Benjamin Franklin (1774), i: 14; meets Richard Bache in Philadelphia, i: 17; member of First Committee on Constitution, x: 119; member of committee to draft French Constitution, i: 282; a member of the Constitutional Club, x: 55; memorial to Congress (6 January 1779), i: 75; his models of bridges, x: 90; his moderate circumstances, i: 97; Monroe's letter to (18 Sept. 1794), v: 157; G. Morris' neglect of, i: 337; never dishonours religion, ii: 183; not enemy of kings, i: 248; his oath of office, i: 62; offered a bribe by Gérard, i: 84; offers America as asylum to Louis XVI, i: 285; offers to burn British fleet, iii: 53; offers to burn enemy shipping, iii: 275; offers his services to "Le Républicaine," vii: 116; on the intrigues of Aaron Burr, x: 136; his opinion of England, i: 219; opposed by John Adams, x: 89; opposes execution of Louis XVI, viii: 303; opposes Gouverneur Morris as Minister to France, v: 169; opposition to Silas Deane, x: 128; his opposition to War, i: 187; outlawed from England, i: 299; ovation to him at Calais (1792), i: 279; his own judgment of himself, x: 134; his part in the beginning of the French Revolution, x: 96; his part in the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776, i: 101; petition for his release, i: 338; the philanthropy of, i: 356; plan for agrarian justice, x: 34; his plan to protect shipping, x: 161; plans for child welfare, vii: 53; his plans for general education, vii: 60; his plan for public employment, vii: 63; plan

PAINE, THOMAS, (*continued*)
to reimburse the people for loss of lands, x: 15; plans to raise revenue for army (1780), i: 109; plans trip to France (1787); i: 164; his poem to Lady Smyth, x: 321; present at attempted suicides, v: 303, 310; presents meeting at Epsom with "Rights of Man" and "Letter to Dundas," vii: 163; his pride in "The Rights of Man," vii: 138; his profession of faith, viii: 3; a program for the improvement of France, ix: 31; project of a bridge over the Thames, i: 210; project for a legislature, v: 26; his property, i: 191; proposal for a bridge over the Seine, x: 212; proposal to keep Burgoyne's troops, i: 46; proposed a Federal government, v: 141, x: 105; proposes an Association of Nations, x: 160; proposes a 400-foot bridge-model in U. S., x: 213; proposes council of censors, iii: 330; proposes Income Tax, vii: 71; proposes old-age pensions, vii: 55; proposes pension for soldiers, vii: 67; proposes reduction of taxes, vii: 68; proposes stone wharfs for river banks, x: 284; proposes tax on Tories, i: 111, ii: 358; proposes trip to England (1780), i: 117; his first publication of "Common Sense," ii: 338; prosecution of his publishers, i: 408; protected by Providence, x: 119; publishes "Rights of Man," x: 97; the real father of the United States, i: 95; reason for publishing "Common Sense," viii: 69; receives degree of M.A. from University of Pennsylvania (1780), i: 112; his relations with Barrère, v: 119; replies to Edmund Burke, vi: 3; and the Republican Club (1791), i: 247; resigns from Foreign Affairs Committee, i: 62; returns to America (1781), i: 122; returns to Bordentown (1786), i: 156; returns to London (1791), i: 250; returns to America (1802), i: 420; reveals Gérard's offer of bribe, i: 87; Robespierre's decree against, viii: 107; Robespierre's writ against, i: 327; sails for America (1774), i: 16; sails for France (1787), i: 167; his salary as Secretary of Committee for Foreign Affairs, i: 75; Samuel Adams' opinion of, viii: 297; his schoolmaster, Rev. William Knowles, vii: 16; second memorial to Congress, i: 77; secretary in Foreign

PAINE, THOMAS, (*continued*)
Department, iv: 152; seized by Robespierre, x: 117; separates from his wife (1774), i: 12; services to U. S., vii: 20; sister of Thomas Paine, i: 3; stopped by the customs at Dover, vii: 179; stopped by customs at Dover, (1792), i: 277; speech accepting citizenship of France and membership in National Assembly, vii: 261; his speech for Louis XVI, i: 287; spelling of his name, i: 2, i: 328; his statement on the Deane case, i: 69; stricken with apoplexy, ix: 293; subscribes his salary for army, i: 107; suggests America as asylum for Louis XVI, vii: 304; summoned before Congress, i: 76; takes up residence at Lewes, i: 8; his trip to France, vii: 20; under fire at Fort Mifflin, i: 41; unsuccessful in business, i: 7; visited by the public executioner, v: 308; his visit to England (1787), i: 168; visit to Paris (1790), i: 221; visit to Washington(1783), i: 146; visits Oliver Ellsworth, x: 82; warned of arrest by William Blake, i: 276; Washington's letter to (18 Sept. 1782), i: 139; Washington's letter to (Sept. 18, 1782), iv: 216; Washington's letter to (Sept. 10, 1783), vii: 19; Washington's letter to (10 Sept. 1783), i: 144; Washington's letter to (6 May 1792), i: 239; Washington's neglect of, x: 123; his wish to save Louis XVI, i: 283; with troops at Fort Lee, ii: 266; writes of Gérard's charges, i: 82; writes first hint of "Declaration of Independence ("A Serious Thought"), i: 28; writes for Providence Gazette (1782), i: 141; writes "Rights of Man" at Angel Inn, i: 230; his writing of "The Age of Reason," viii: 103; the youth of, vii: 18

Palmer, Mrs., legatee of Paine, x: 294

Panics, the usefulness of, ii: 266

PANTHEISM, COMPARING CHRISTIANISM WITH (Age of Reason, I), viii: 68

PAPER CURRENCY, in the two Revolutions, i: 307; the basis of every system of credit, v: 257; of the revolution, iv: 143; war increases amount of, iv: 361; Mr. Pitt's plan for funding the debt, iv: 367; the proper use of, iv: 292

PAPER MONEY, on (Dissertations), iv: 221; Preface, iv: 219

Parable, of human worship, vii: 102; of political movement, vii: 106

Paris, its streets suited to defence, vi: 45; citizens enraged by Garde du Corps, vi: 57
Paris, the mayor of, executed, vi: 49; involved in plot against National Assembly, vi: 46, 62
Paris, Parliament of, rejects tax edicts, vi: 126
Parker, Sir Peter, defeat of, iii: 13
PARLIAMENT, bills of conciliation (1778), iv: 150; Debates, House of Lords, March 5, 1776, quoted, ii: 350; (1688) declaration—William and Mary, vi: 18; expected advantage from conquest of America, iii: 87; the House of Peers, vii: 30; Inquiry into affairs in India (1773), ii: 41; a list of questions for, iii: 89; origin of English, x: 246; would not grant reform, vii: 249; the errors of the minority, iii: 111; "constitution" the cant word of, vi: 185; the composition of, vi: 308
Parliament (*France*), seized by ministry, vi: 131
Patronage, Jefferson's disregard of, x: 254; John Adams' abuse of, x: 253
PAUL, *Emperor of Russia,* his death prevents a "Law of Nations," x: 170; proposed as first President of Association of Nations, x: 169
Paul, the Epistles of, viii: 256; ix: 148
PEACE AND THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES, Published in "Pennsylvania Gazette,"
June 30, 1779, iv: 11
July 21, 1779, iv: 23
PEACE, AND THE PROBABLE ADVANTAGES THEREOF, THOUGHTS ON THE (Crisis xiii), iii: 237
PEACE, intimations of, iv: 199; the natural desire of all men, ii: 184; Rousseau's plan for permanent, ii: 232
Pedie's Museum, Paine's bridge models to be in, x: 204
"Pemberton, John," the paper signed by, ii: 345
Penalties, inflicted for selling Paine's works, i: 300
Pension list, the British, costs more than American government, vii: 149
PENNSYLVANIA, TO THE CITIZENS OF, ON THE PROPOSAL FOR CALLING A CONVENTION (1805), (Constitutional Reform), x: 243
PENNSYLVANIA (1779), Act for Abolition of Slavery in, i: 103; character of, iii: 40; constitutional history of, vi: 283; Paine asks compensation from (1779), i: 100; tax and army quota of, iii: 134; move to revise State Constitution, x: 235
PENNSYLVANIA ASSEMBLY, Danger of small number of representatives, ii: 164; Minutes of the, quoted, iv: 257; Paine elected clerk of, i: 103; Vote for repeal of tender laws, iv: 299
Pennsylvania Bank, The, origin of, iv: 248
PENNSYLVANIAN CONSTITUTION, The (1776), v: 37; copies English government, x: 255; Declaration of rights prefixed to, iv: 229; Paine's part in, i: 101
Pennsylvania, Council, Paine's letter to (11 Oct., 1779), i: 101
"Pennsylvania Gazette," writers paid by Gérard, i: 88
"Peace and The Newfoundland Fisheries," published in the, iv: 11
Pennsylvania, Historical Society of, Paine letter in, i: 125
"Pennsylvania Magazine," Robert Aitin founds the, i: 18
"Pennsylvania Packet," Paine's notice in (Jan. 2, 1779), i: 73
Pennsylvania Senate, the, x: 256
Pennsylvania State Convention (1776), vi: 283
Pennsylvania, University of, gives M.A. to Paine (1780), i: 112
PEOPLE OF FRANCE, ADDRESS TO THE, vii: 261
PEOPLE OF AMERICA, TO THE, Crisis, iii: 173
PEOPLE OF ENGLAND, ADDRESS TO THE (Crisis VIII), ii: 101; Letter to the, iii: 65
People, Freedom must originate with the, iv: 344
PEOPLE, TO THE (an address), (The Foresters' Letters), ii: 236
Persian, version of Adam & Eve, ix: 124
Peru, the mines of, iv: 327
Petition, for release of Paine, i: 338
PHILADELPHIA, The British evacuate, i: 55; the British enter iii: 267; convention of all States at (1787), vi: 289; destruction in, iii: 144; the loss of, iii: 37; might have been taken by pirate, ii: 156; Paine's model for a bridge at, x: 189; probable attack on, ii: 353; proposals for defence of, iii: 265; on the prospect of the British quitting, i: 54; taken by Howe (1777), i: 49

Philadelphia House (*Paris*), Paine stays at, i: 281, 284
Philadelphia Library Company, their cabinet of fossils, ii: 25
Philanthropy, Jesus' predominant trait, viii: 33
Philosophical Society, the American, iv: 43; ii: 32; Franklin's letter in the, i: 154; Paine becomes acquainted with the, i: 19
Philosophy, Natural, See Natural Philosophy
Pichegru, Charles (President Council of Five Hundred), x: 52
PICKERING, TIMOTHY, a Bear, x: 89, 130; exults over French defeat, x: 129; political character of, x: 151
Pickpockets, on the methods of, x: 127
Pikes, heads carried on, vi: 50
PITT, WILLIAM, and the use of the "Rights of Man," vii: 109; analysis of his speech, vii: 106; his appointment as minister, vii: 85; the bungling of, x: 67; the career of, vii: 85; his intrigues for the recall of Monroe, x: 77; plan for reducing the national debt, iv: 360; v: 279
Plagiarism, suspected of William Pitt, vii: 109
"Plain Truth, Mr.," defence of Deane, iii: 319; by "Candidus," ii: 211, 212
PLAN OF A DECLARATION OF THE NATURAL, CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF MAN, vii: 315
PLAN AND ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE, THE (Age of Reason, I), viii: 78
Planets, the motion of the, ix: 9
Plassey, Clive at the battle of, ii: 30
PLURALITY OF WORLDS, ADVANTAGES OF LIFE IN A (Age of Reason, I), viii: 83
Plutus, The God of Wealth, ii: 52; ii: 75
Plymouth Company, iv: 59
Poetry, of the nature of poetry, viii: 26
POLITICAL INQUIRIES, THE SOCIETY FOR, iv: 311
Politics, as Jockeyship, viii: 69
Politics in England, the state of, iv: 370
Pompadour, Mme de, Paine lives in her former residence, i: 316
Popish practises of the British government, ii: 83
"Populi, Vox," signature of Thomas Paine, ii: 67
POPULATION, of America, its nature, vi: 245; of England and France, iv: 345; statistics of, x: 22
PORTER, FARMER SHORT'S DOG; A TALE (Poem), x: 303
Portland, the Duke of, Paine's visit to, i: 196
POSTSCRIPT TO THE LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL, iv: 199
Potter, on the allegory of God as the, ix: 307
Poverty, absent in America, vii: 148; does not exist in the natural state, x: 10
Power, the balance of, v: 68; must have a beginning, vi: 281; permanent and accidental, iv: 204
Prayer, of dictatorial prayer, viii: 41; not enjoined in Old Testament, ix: 57
Precedent, Government by, a vile system, vi: 302
Predestination, ix: 307
PREFACE, To Dissertations, iv: 219; To Prospects on the Rubicon, iv: 317; To Public Good, iv: 51
Prejudice, the enemy of civilization, iv: 170
Prerogative, vs. Parliament, iii: 88
Presbyterian ministers, English subsidy to, viii: 304
PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA, OF THE, ii: 150
PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS, THOUGHTS ON THE, ii: 122
PRESENT STATE OF NEWS, ON THE (Crisis XI), iii: 195
Presidency, John Adams' ideas on, i: 173; restrictions governing the, vi: 316
President, Washington's salary as, vi: 291
PRESS, LIBERTY OF THE, x: 287
Priesthood, abolition of, in France, viii: 3; character of the, in France, ix: 30
Price, Rev. Dr., Burke's abuse of, vi: 17
PRIMOGENITURE, evils of, vii: 77; the law of, vii: 33; the origin of, vi: 95
Princeton, The Battle of, iii: 13, iv: 136; Paine in the, i: 41
Printing, gives man a divine attribute, ix: 77
Prison companions of Paine, i: 327, viii: 106
Pritchard, Samuel, "Masonry Dissected," quoted, ix: 167
PRIVATE LETTERS TO JEFFERSON,
I (Apr. 20, 1793), v: 49
II (Oct. 20, 1793), v: 52
(Oct. 1, 1800), x: 81

PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE, MY, ix: 303
PRIVATEERS, The "King of Prussia," vii: 17; The "Terrible," vii: 16
Privateer "Madam," the, captures packet, vii: 21
PROCLAMATION, LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS OF THE LATE, vii: 185
Proclamation against Seditious Writings, The Royal, a meeting to approve the, vii: 159
Proclamation, Lord Howe's, i: 41
Proclamation of the British Commissioners, quoted, iii: 48, 49
Proclamation of 1763, The, no boundaries of Virginia, iv: 85
PROFESSION OF FAITH, THE AUTHOR'S, (Age of Reason), viii: 3
PROPERTY, on the inequality of, v: 226; literary, iv: 114; the two kinds of, x: 2
PROPHECIES, EXAMINATION OF THE, Author's Preface, ix: 205; Examination of Prophecies, ix: 211
Prophecy, supposed prophecies of the birth of Christ, viii: 183
PROPHETS AND THEIR PROPHECIES (Age of Reason, I), viii: 98
Prophet, an explanation of the word, viii: 27; the meaning of the word, viii: 197
Prophets, the books of the, viii: 179; a table of the, viii: 161
PROPOSAL THAT LOUISIANA BE PURCHASED, x: 93
PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI TO TRIAL, ON THE, vii: 291
Prosecution of publishers, of Paine's works, i: 300; i: 406
PROSECUTION OF "RIGHTS OF MAN, II," i: 264, i: 291; published accounts of the trial, i: 297
PROSPECT PAPERS,
I REMARKS ON R. HILL'S SERMON, ix: 83
II ON THE WORD "RELIGION," ETC., ix: 87
III OF CAIN AND ABEL, ix: 93
IV THE TOWER OF BABEL, ix: 95
V OF THE RELIGION OF DEISM, ETC., ix: 98
VI TO THE MEMBER OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, ix: 111
VII OF THE SABBATH DAY IN CONNECTICUT, ix: 114
VIII HINTS TOWARD FORMING A SOCIETY, ETC., ix: 118
IX TO BISHOP MOORE OF N. Y., ix: 126
X TO JOHN MASON, ix: 131
XI ON DEISM AND THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE, ix: 138
PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON, iv: 321; Preface, iv: 317
"Prospects on the Rubicon," the writing of, i: 170
Protestant Church Bill, in Canada, ii: 82
"Protestant," the word, ix: 89
Proverbs, the books of, viii: 175
Providence "Gazette," Paine writes for (1782), i: 141
Psalm XIX, quoted, ix: 291; (Addison's Version), viii: 96; Gentile origin of, ix: 135
Psalms, the book of, viii: 174
PUBLIC ON MR. DEANE'S AFFAIRS, TO THE, iii: 303
Public employment, Paine's plan for, vii: 63
PUBLIC GOOD, iv: 53; Preface, iv: 51
Public money, drawn from misery, vii: 46

Q

QUAKERS, EPISTLE TO, ii: 183
QUAKERS, Paine's father a, i: 3, viii: 68, ix: 23; Thomas Paine as a, ii: 79; acted as spies for the British, i: 56; Deists rather than Christians, viii: 271; the "John Pemberton" paper, ii: 345; Paine desires burial in their cemetery, x: 295; Paine's mother becomes a, i: 168; the Quaker meeting, ix: 20; should approve independence, ii: 328; Tory sympathies of the, ii: 290
Quakerism, nearest to Deism, viii: 73; Paine accused of, vii: 309
Quebec Bill, the, ii: 14
Quiberon Bay, the expedition against, v: 183

Rahl, Colonel Johann Gottlieb, ii: 293
Raleigh, Sir Walter, given charter to Virginia, iv: 58
Randolph, Edmund, succeeds Jefferson as Secretary of State, i: 355
Randolph, John, G. Morris' letter to (20 Jan. 1812), i: 89; (7 Nov. 1794), i: 381
RAYNAL, INTRODUCING A LETTER TO THE ABBÉ, iv: 111
RAYNAL, LETTER TO THE ABBÉ, iv: 117
Raynal, The Abbé, Paine begins a reply to, i: 131; "Common Sense," iv: 188
Raynal, The Abbé, "Revolution d'Amerique," quoted, iv: 118, iv: 141, 148, 161, iv: 178
Reason, The Age of, see Age of Reason, The
Reason, only means to discover God, viii: 45
Rebellion, of Wat Tyler, vii: 38
RECALL OF MONROE, THE, x: 77
RECAPITULATION (Age of Reason, I), viii: 100
Reconcilation, not desired by England, iii: 73; a discussion of, ii: 122
Redemption, the doctrine of the, viii: 38; dogma of the, ix: 108
Reed, Joseph, Paine's letter to (4 June 1780), i: 108; Washington's letter to (28 May, 1780), quoted, i: 106
REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LORD CLIVE, ii: 39
REFLECTIONS ON TITLES, ii: 65
REFLECTIONS ON UNHAPPY MARRIAGES, ii: 73
REFORM, CONSTITUTIONAL, x: 243
Reform, legislative, vii: 260
Reform Bill, Burke's, vii: 245
Refugees, denunciation of the, iii: 217; from France, vi: 48
Regency, the affair of the, vi: 182; the nature of a, vi: 275
"Reign of Emperor Charles V.," by Robertson, quoted, ii: 56, 58, 60
RELIGIONS, CONCERNING THE MULTIPLICITY OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 86
RELIGION OF DEISM COMPARED WITH THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, ETC., ix: 98
"RELIGION," ETC., OF THE WORD (Prospect Papers), ix: 87
RELIGION, History and, ix: 118; must be free from mystery, viii: 90; natural and revealed, ix: 90; the nature of, vi: 103, ix: 19; no man should make a living by, ix: 20; no occasion for revealed religion, viii: 275; Paine never dishonors, ii: 183; a parable of human worship, vii: 102; a private affair, viii: 342; Society of Theophilanthropists, viii: 345; cannot be by proxy, ix: 20; fanaticism and infidelity the enemies of, ix: 1; all founded on unity of man, vi: 68; government should protect all, ii: 162
RELIGION (continued)
RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE (Prospect Papers), ix: 159
Religious tyranny, the worst, viii: 311
"Religious year of the Théophilanthropists," quoted, viii: 345
REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION (Common Sense), ii: 97
REMARKS ON R. HALL'S SERMON (Prospect Papers), ix: 83
REPLY TO THE BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, EXTRACTS FROM A, ix: 33
Report of Committee on the Bank of North America, quoted, iv: 258, 284
REPUBLIC, HAIL GREAT (poem), x: 319
Republic, The first principles of, iv: 229; the meaning of, vi: 268; Paine the inventor of the democratic, i: 34
Republic, the French, see France
Republican Club, vii: 301; the members of, i: 248
"RÉPUBLICAIN, LE," TO THE AUTHORS OF, vii: 116
REPUBLICAN MANIFESTO, A, vii: 122, i: 244
Republican party (U. S.), hostility of England to, x: 79
"Resolve," supplies sent by, i: 122
Resurrection, The, ix: 107, viii: 231; the doctrine of the, viii: 258
Resurrection of the body, a gloomy doctrine, ix: 73
RETREAT ACROSS THE DELAWARE, iii: 257
Retrospective laws, iv: 242
Revealed religion, responsible for corruptions, viii: 66
REVELATION, DEFINING THE (Age of Reason, I), viii: 41
REVELATIONS, CONCERNING MISSIONS AND (Age of Reason, I), viii: 6
REVELATION, Creation a revelation, ix: 276; a definition of, viii: 22; the nature of, viii: 267

Revenues, of England and France, iv: 346
Revision, Council of (*N. Y. State*), powers vested in the, x: 237
REVOLUTION (*AMERICAN*), affairs in the Jerseys (1777), i: 43; cabal to remove Washington from command of army, x: 122; causes of the American, iv: 119; compared with French revolution, i: 304; constancy the common virtue of the, v: 191; distress of army at Morristown (1780), i: 106; effects on the minds of men, iv: 171; Franklin urges Paine to write history of, i: 115; Paine projects a history of the, i: 97; situation of America and England at end of, vii: 143; termination of hostilities (18 Apr. 1783), i: 141; unconstitutional acts in the, x: 60; made popular by the Queen of France, vi: 118
REVOLUTION, FRENCH,
A Republican Manifesto, i: 244, vii: 212
An Essay for the Use of New Republicans in Their Opposition to Monarchy, vii: 271
On the Propriety of Bringing Louis XVI to Trial, vii: 291
Reasons for Preserving the Life of Louis XVI, vii: 299
Shall Louis XVI be Respited, vii: 309; an address approving the, v: 41; British opinion of (1789), i: 212; compared with the American revolution, i: 304; decree against foreigners, i: 313; French fleet, the, iv: 206; Girondins and the Mountain, i: 302; in France and America, vii: 91; letter to Danton on the, v: 55; letter to Jefferson on the, v: 49; Paine's part in the beginning of, x: 96; Parliament rejects tax edicts, vi: 126; reply to Burke's attack on, vi: 157; returned French officers in, vi: 120; taking of the Bastille, vi: 39; the cause of all mankind, vii: 266; the first shot, vi: 61; the flight of Louis XVI (1791), i: 242; the formation of a Republican club, vii: 116
Revolution, fear of, in England, vii: 294; benefits of a revolution in England, vii: 100
Revolutionary Society (England), vi: 163
Rhode Island objects to entering Union, i: 141
Rhymes, Songs and, x: 299
RICKMAN, THOMAS CLIO, describes Paine's life in Paris, i: 319; prosecuted for printing "Rights of Man," i: 259; publishes "Life of Thomas Paine" (1819), i: 257; legatee of Paine, x: 294; Paine's friendship with, i: 256
Right, a definition of, iv: 55; distinction of natural and civil rights, vi: 69; individual and social, i: 175; inherent in whole people, vii: 18
Rights, the Bill of, vi: 296, vii: 233
RIGHTS OF MAN, THE, Part I
Dedication to George Washington, vi: 1
Preface to the English Edition, vi: 3
Preface to the French Edition, vi: 9
Rights of Man, Part First, vi: 16
Conclusion, vi: 199
"RIGHTS OF MAN," Part I; John Adams denounces, i: 235; fifty copies sent to Washington, i: 236; first edition of, i: 230; first English edition, vi: 3; Paine's letter concerning (21 July, 1791), i: 236; Paine proud of having written, vii: 138; Mr. Pitt and the MS. of, vii: 109; prosecution of the, vii: 131, 159, 198; published in French (1791), i: 248; publication of, x: 97; requests to reprint, vii: 215; Washington embarrassed by dedication of, i: 235
RIGHTS OF MAN, Part II
French Translator's Preface, vi: 213
To M. de Lafayette, vi: 215
Preface, vi: 219
Introduction, vi: 231
Chap. I. Of Society and Civilization, vi: 239
II. Of the Origin of the Present Old Governments, vi: 249
III. Of the Old and New Systems of Government, vi: 255
IV. On Constitution, vi: 281
V. Ways and Means of Improving the Condition of Europe, etc., vii: 1
Appendix, vii: 106
"RIGHTS OF MAN," Part II, fifty copies sent to Washington, i: 260; Paine presents 100 copies to meeting at Epsom, vii: 163; prosecution of, i: 291, vii: 285; published, 1792, i: 259; success of, i: 263; the writing of, i: 230

RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS, DECLARATION OF THE (By The National Assembly of France, 26 Sept. 1789), vi: 145
RIGHTS OF MAN, PLAN OF A DECLARATION OF THE, vii: 315
"RIGHTS OF MAN," THE PROSECUTION OF THE
TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS, vii: 137
TO THE ENGLISH ATTORNEY-GENERAL ON THE PROSECUTION AGAINST THE SECOND PART OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN, vii: 285
Rights of Man, must be traced to the Creation, vi: 65; not devisable, vi: 172
Rittenhouse, David, friendship with Paine, ii: 207; he and Paine experiment with marsh gas, x: 279
Robertson, Dr. William, on duelling, ii: 55, 56, 58, 60
ROBESPIERRE, MAXIMILIEN MARIE ISIDORE, asks execution of Paine, v: 154; his application for decree against Paine, x: 118; beheaded (1793), i: 327; decree on trial proceedings, viii: 339; his decree against Paine, viii: 107; decree against foreigners, i: 313; Paine's essay on, lost, i: 322
Rockingham, the Marquis of, his declaratory act, quoted, ii: 313
Rodney, Admiral, his action off the West Indies and Cape Vincent, iv: 208
ROMANS, ix: 18-21; REMARKS ON, ix: 307
Rotherham, memories of Paine at, i: 190
Rotten boroughs, Paine opposed by the, vii: 185
Rousseau, J. J., "Contrat Social," quoted, vii: 275; his plan for perpetual peace, ii: 232
Royalism, in America after the revolution, i: 147
"Royal Pedigree," of George III, vii: 273
ROYALTY, vii: 273
Royalty, arguments in favor of, vii: 281
Royalty and monarchy, distinctions between, vii: 273
RUBICON, PROSPECTS ON THE, iv: 321
preface, iv: 317
Ruralinda, and Cupid, ii: 50
RUSSIA, becomes neutral, x 160; embargo against England, x: 87; encouragement of learning in, iv: 114; English hatred of, i: 197
Ruth, the book of, viii: 148

S

SABBATH DAY IN CONNECTICUT, OF THE (Prospect Papers), ix: 114
Sabbath, The, ix: 61; the lunar sabbath, ix: 70
Safety, the Council of, see Council of Safety
Salaries, of the American Government, vii: 146
Samson, the public executioner visits Paine, v: 308
Samuel, and the Jewish monarchy, ii: 111; contradictions in the two books of, viii: 192; the two books of, viii: 148
Sandwich, Lord, the attitude of, ii: 80
Satan, the fable of, viii: 16
Saul, as a prophet, viii: 27
Saunders, Admiral, as militarist, iii: 78
Scaliger, Julius, ix: 63
Schuylkill river, letter on a bridge over the, i: 161; Paine's project allowed to lapse, i: 166; Paine's model for a bridge over, x: 189
SCIENCE, Greeks formed basis of, viii: 58; not an human invention, viii: 51; opposed by church, viii: 63
Scott, Rev. George, letter to Colonel William McFarran, ix: 160
Sedition Law, the, x: 151, 156
(Seditious writings), the Royal Proclamation (against), see Proclamation, the Royal
Seer, the meaning of the word, viii: 108
Seine, Paine's bridge planned for, i: 173; i: 196; x: 212; Paine's proposal for bridge over the, project of a bridge over
Seizures from American vessels, v: 182
Select Committee, the (Parliament 1773), on affairs in India, ii: 41, 43
Selthens vs. Hooseman, the case of, viii: 339
Senate, the Pennsylvania, x: 256
SERMON, REMARKS ON R. HALL'S (Prospect Papers), ix: 83

Sermon on the Mount, concerning the, viii: 272
SERIOUS THOUGHT, A, ii: 1
Settlement, suggested settlement of negroes on frontiers, ii: 10
"Seven years," British reverence for, iv: 214
SEX, AN OCCASIONAL LETTER ON THE FEMALE, ii: 85
SHALL LOUIS XVI BE RESPITED? vii: 309
Shaphan, the scribe forges the books of Moses, ix: 18
Sheffield, on a pamphlet by, iii: 250
SHELBURNE, TO THE EARL OF (Crisis XII), iii: 219
SHERIFF TO THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, TO THE, vii: 173
Shipbuilding the pride of America, ii: 155
SIEYÈS, TO THE ABBÉ, vii: 127
Sieyès, the Abbé, member of the Committee on Constitution, x: 119
SIGNATURES of Thomas Paine, Atlanticus, ii: 33, 48; Common Sense, ii: 278; Detector—P, ix: 155; An Enemy to Cant and Imposition, ix: 116; Esop, ii: 37; ii: 54; The Forester, ii: 203; "Friend to the Indians A," ix: 113; Justice and Humanity, ii: 10; A Lover of Peace, ii: 84; "A member of the Deistical Church," ix: 130; "A member of the Deistical Congregation," ix: 137; "A true Deist," ix: 117; Vox Populi, ii: 67.
Skipwith, Mr., character of, x: 89; Paine's Letter to (1 Mar 1804), 1: 426
SKETCH, AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL, i: 459
SLAVERY IN AMERICA, AFRICAN, ii: 3
SLAVERY, act for the abolition of, in Pennsylvania (1779), i: 103; Paine denounces, x: 187; Paine's essay against, i: 20
SLAVES, EMANCIPATION OF, iv: 47
Slave Trade, the British, ii: 2
Smith, Adam, on banking, v: 289, 295; on the national debts of Europe, v: 256
Smith, Capt. George, "Use and Abuse of Free Masonry," quoted, ix: 169
Smith, Rev. Dr. William ("Cato"), ii: 193; oration rejected, ii: 210
Smollett, "History of England," quoted, iii: 171
Smyth, Lady Robert ("Little Corner of the World"), poem to, x: 321; correspondence with Paine, i: 366
Smyth, Sir Robert, poem addressed to, x: 323; renounces title, i: 368
SNOWDROP AND THE CRITIC, THE (Poem), x: 309
Société Républicane, see Republican Club
SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION, OF (Rights of Man, II), vi: 239
SOCIETY FOR POLITICAL INQUIRIES, THE, iv: 311
Society, all its great laws are laws of nature, vi: 243; on the state of, x: 9
Society for Constitutional information, Paine's gift to the, i: 272; letter to the chairman of, i: 273
SOCIETY, HINTS TOWARD FORMING, ETC. (Prospect Papers), ix: 118
"Society for promoting Constitutional knowledge," i: 233
Society for promoting Christian knowledge, prosecutes Paine's printer, x: 91
Society and government, distinction between, ii: 97
Solar system, the, viii: 78
Solomon, the character of, viii: 177
SONGS AND RHYMES,
THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE, x: 301
FARMER SHORT'S DOG PORTER: A TALE, x: 303
THE SNOWDROP AND THE CRITIC, x: 309
LIBERTY TREE, x: 312
AN ADDRESS TO LORD HOWE, x: 315
HAIL GREAT REPUBLIC, x: 319
FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR, TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD, x: 321
TO SIR ROBERT SMYTH (WHAT IS LOVE?), x: 323
CONTENTMENT, OR, IF YOU PLEASE, CONFESSION, x: 325
Soule, François, translation of "Rights of Man," i: 248
South America, the commercial possibilities of, vii: 96
South Sea, Virginia claims boundary to the, iv: 63; voyages across the, iv: 72
South Virginia Company, the, iv: 59
Sovereign power in government, iv: 221
SPAIN, alliance with France, iv: 327; Britain asks the mediation of, iii: 200; England disputes with, i: 224; Memorial of the Spanish court, iii: 200; on our demands from, v: 203; politics regarding (1788),

SPAIN, (continued)
i: 198; proposes mediation (1779), iv: 178
Special juries, the nature of, viii: 340
SPECIFICATION OF THOMAS PAINE, v: 1
Speech, in the French National Convention, July 7, 1795, v: 243
Speech of the Earl of Shelburne, reply to the, iii: 219
Speech, of the King of England, iii: 159; the King's (1775), ii: 168
Spinoza, believed Job a Gentile, ix: 53; on the book of Job, viii: 171
St. John's Day, masonic festival on, ix: 179
St. Paul, a quibbler, viii: 35
St. Vincent's, the massacre at, ii: 295
Stadtholder of Holland, the situation of the, iv: 332
Stanhope, Lord, Paine's meeting with (1790), i: 215
Stamp Act, Raynal's judgment of the, iv: 119
State, Paine wishes to make a new, iv: 101
States, convention of all the (1787), vi: 289
States, Federal right to make new, iv: 97
States-General (France), alone able to tax, vi: 124; proposed convocation of the, vi: 132
State's rights, iii: 188
Staunton, Sir George, Bart., Paine's letter to, x: 189
Steamboat, Paine invents a, i: 188
Stith, "History of Virginia" quoted, iv: 72
Stormont, Lord, his eulogy of the British Constitution, vii: 190
Stuart family, the, iii: 170, vi: 295; the fall of the, vii: 305; their overthrow in Ireland, iv: 298
Styx, of a voyage to the, ii: 34
Subsidy to dissenting ministers, vii: 248
Suicide, Paine's description of attempted, v: 303, 310
Sunderland bridge, the, x: 213
Sun-worship, Christianity derived from, ix: 172
SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS, A, iii: 211
SUPERNUMERARY CRISIS, A, iii: 249
SUPERSTITION, TRUE THEOLOGY, AND THAT OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 49
Supplies from France, on frigate "Resolve," i: 122
Supplies, for America, sent by the "Amphitrite," "Seine" and "Mercury," i: 73, iii: 323
Suppose, America conquered, iii: 126; America not discovered till 1777, iii: 92; that English government were beginning, vii: 210; Britain had conquered America, iii: 86
SUSSEX, TO THE SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF, vii: 173
Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus of, prevents duelling, ii: 62
SYSTEM OF FINANCE, DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH, v: 255
SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT, OF THE OLD AND NEW. (Rights of Man, II), vi: 255

T

Talbot, Lord, speech in Parliament, ii: 350
TALE, A FARMER SHORT'S DOG PORTER (Poem), x: 303
Tar and feathers, for Sir William Howe, iii: 3
TAXATION, the burden of taxation, vii: 27; constitution the most productive machine for, vi: 297; of conquered countries, iii: 87; Parliaments reject Tax edicts, vi: 126; in France, before revolution, vi: 121; on the subject of, iii: 125; opposition to import duty, iii: 252; Petitions to escape taxes (1780), iv: 249; Paine proposes tax on Tories, i: 111; difficulty of paying taxes, iii: 138; States-General alone should tax, *TAXATION, (continued)*
vi: 124; tax on the stock of the national debt, vii: 88; the tax on beer, vii: 74
TAXES, the amount of (England 1796), v: 293; classes of taxes, v: 248; in England and America, vii: 59; in England, iii: 127; increased during, 1566-1791, vii: 37; the inevitable consequence of war, iv: 323; Paine's plan to reduce, vii: 68; Paine proposes graduated income tax, vii: 71; poor-rates of Birmingham, vii: 51; reduced during 1066-1466, vii: 36; remission of taxes to the poor, vii: 52; land tax in England, vii: 26; trade and taxes, vii: 49; a tax on Tories, ii: 358

Telescopes, discovery of (1610), viii: 63
Tender laws, vote for repeal of (1780), iv: 299
"Tennis-court oath," the, of the National Assembly (France), vi: 140
Tenure of judges, x: 267
"Terrible," privateer, i: 6; engagement with "The Vengeance," i: 6; Paine enters the, vii: 16
Terror, The, Paine threatened by, i: 323
Terrorists, in America and France, x: 118
TESTAMENT, OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW (Prospect Papers), ix: 146
TESTAMENT, NEW (Contradictory Doctrines, Between Matthew and Mark), ix: 299
TESTAMENT, OF THE NEW (Age of Reason), viii: 31
TESTAMENT, TURNING TO THE NEW (Age of Reason, II), viii: 217
TESTAMENT, OF THE OLD AND NEW (Prospect Papers), xi: 116
TESTAMENT, NEW, corrupted ancient doctrine, ix: 73; dispute over the, viii: 249; parables in the, ix: 106; division of the books of, viii: 36; vote on the books of the, viii: 248, 301
TESTAMENT, AS TO THE OLD (Age of Reason, II), viii: 111
TESTAMENT, EXAMINATION OF THE OLD (Age of Reason, I), viii: 21
TESTAMENT, OF THE OLD AND NEW (Prospect Papers), ix: 116
Testament, Old, the first appearance of, ix: 120
Thames, project of a bridge over the, i: 210
"Thatched House Tavern," the address at the (20 Aug. 1791), vii: 108; manifesto of the, i: 250
Thedore of Corsica, iv: 56
THEOLOGY, TRUE THEOLOGY AND THAT OF SUPERSTITION (Age of Reason, I), viii: 49
THEOLOGY, OF THE TRUE (Age of Reason, I), viii: 19
"Theology," the word, ix: 89
Theophilanthropes, The, viii: 345
Theophilanthropy, The Dogmas of, ix: 1
"Theophilanthropists," the Religious Year of the, quoted, viii: 345; the society of, ix: 14
Thetford, Paine's visit to (1787), i: 168
Third Estate, the (Tiers Etat), character of the, vi: 135
THOMAS PAINE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE U. S. AND PARTICULARLY TO THE LEADERS OF THE FEDERAL FACTION, x: 95
THOMAS PAINE, THE WILL OF, x: 291
THOUGHTS ON DEFENSIVE WAR, ii: 79
THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE, MY PRIVATE, ix: 303
THOUGHTS ON THE PEACE AND THE PROBABLE ADVANTAGES THEREOF (Crisis, XIII), iii: 237
THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS, ii: 122
Thought, the durability of, viii: 260
Ticonderoga, iii: 15; threatened (1777), i: 44
Tillotson, Archbishop, on the two Testaments, ix: 116
Time, the decimal division of, ix: 69; the early measurement of, ix: 62
TITLES, REFLECTIONS ON, ii: 65
Titles, abolition of, vi: 92
TO THE ABBÉ SIÉYÈS, vii: 127
TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, vii: 131
TO THE AUTHORS OF "LE RÉPUBLICAIN," vii: 116
TO BISHOP MOORE OF NEW YORK (Prospect Papers), ix: 126
TO CATO (The Foresters' Letters),
I. ii: 193
II. ii: 204
III. ii: 222
TO THE CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA ON THE PROPOSAL FOR CALLING A CONVENTION (1805) (Constitutional Reform), x: 243
TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS (Calais, Sept. 15, 1792), vii: 179
TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS, vii: 137
TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE (Crisis XII), iii: 219
TO THE ENGLISH ATTORNEY-GENERAL ON THE PROSECUTION AGAINST THE SECOND PART OF THE "RIGHTS OF MAN," vii: 285
TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA, x: 177
TO JOHN MASON (Prospect Papers), ix: 131
TO LORD HOWE (Crisis II), ii: 279
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY, STYLING ITSELF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY (Prospect Papers), ix: 111
TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND ON THE INVASION OF ENGLAND, x: 217
TO THE PUBLIC ON MR. DEANE'S AFFAIR, iii: 303

To the Sheriff of the County of Sussex, vii: 173
To the People (an address) (The Forester's Letters), ii: 236
Tobacco, a monopoly of Virginia and Maryland, iv: 53
Todd, Albert M., Paine letters in collection of, i: 219, i. 273
"Tom Paine's Jests, etc.," i: 299
Tom's River, loss of fort on, iii: 212
TOOKE, HORNE, interrupted in meeting, vii: 168; presents Paine's letter to Lord Onslow, vii: 166; signer of Address and Declaration, Thatched House Tavern (Aug. 20, 1791), v: 41, vii: 108; supposed author of Address and Declaration at the Thatched House Tavern, vii: 108
TORIES, among the Quakers, ii: 290; the character of the, ii: 269; a definition of the term, ii: 315; Howe the greatest enemy of the, ii: 272; Paine proposes tax on, i: 111, ii: 358
Toulouse, Archbishop of, appointed Prime Minister of France, vi: 125; his relations with Paine, vi: 5
Tower of Babel, The (Prospect Papers), ix: 95
Towns, corporation, vii: 22
Townsend, Lord, speech in Parliament, ii: 350
Trade, the balance of, v: 284; British regulation of (1789), i: 206
Treason, Louis XVI accused of, vii: 125
TREATY, with England, unsatisfactory, x: 83; the commercial (A Supernumerary Crisis), iii: 249; of Alliance and Commerce, recognizing citizenship, v: 125; with France, iv: 149, 161, 171; Gouverneur Morris tries to abrogate, i: 331; sacred character of, iii: 208; with Indians, Payne appointed to make, i: 42; account of Jay's treaty with England, v: 177
Treaty of Cession (of Louisiana), quoted, x: 181
Tree, Liberty (Poem), x: 312
Trenton, battle of, iii: 13, iv: 131; Paine in the, i: 41; the watchword at, i: 40
"True Deist, A," signature of Thomas Paine, ix: 117
True Revelation, Defining the Age of Reason I), viii: 41
True Theology, and That of Superstition (Age of Reason I), viii: 49
True Theology, Of the (Age of Reason I), viii: 19
Turning to the New Testament (Age of Reason II), viii: 217
Tyler, Wat, his rebellion, vii: 38
Tyranny, all hereditary government is, vi: 257; religious tyranny the worst, viii: 311

U

Unhappy Marriages, Reflections on, ii: 73
Union, of America, the nature of the, iii: 186; of the states, iii: 241
Universe, The Plan and Order of the (Age of Reason, I), viii: 78
"Use and Abuse of Freemasonry" (by Capt. George Smith), quoted, ix: 169
Useful and Entertaining Hints, ii: 25

V

Vadier, reply to petition, to free Paine, i: 340; refuses to release Paine, v: 126
Valley Forge, Washington at, i: 49, iii: 277
Vanhuele, letter to Paine in prison, v: 118; warning to Paine, v: 118
Vaughan, Benjamin, Jefferson's letter to (2 July 1787), quoted, i: 168;
Vaughan, General (British), burns Kingston, iii: 23
VERGENNES, COUNT, character of, vi: 118; his distrust of Arthur Lee, i: 59; Gérard's letter to (17 Jan. 1780), i: 85; persuades Louis XVI to aid America, i: 64
Versailles, the expedition to, vi: 55
Veto, the power of, x: 245

Vienna, the proposed Congress at, iii: 203
VIRGINIA, advantages from tobacco culture, iv: 53; boundaries set by proclamations of 1763, iv: 85; the claims of, iv: 57; the effect of a new State upon, iv: 103
Virginia Companies, the, iv: 59
Virginia, state of, proposes continental conferences, vi: 289
"Virtues and Reward" (Dragonetti), quoted, ii: 147
Vote, on the books of New Testament, viii: 248, 301
"Vox Populi," signature of Thomas Paine, ii: 67

W

WAR, THOUGHTS ON DEFENSIVE, ii: 79
WAR, advises Britain against, iii: 96; any war popular in London, iv: 339; battle of Lexington, ii: 124; battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, North Carolina, ii: 198, 211; battle of Trenton, iv: 131; battle of Princeton, iv: 136; blockade of American posts, iii: 145; the wars of Britain, ii: 325; (Civil), caused by hereditary government, vi: 262; Clive at the battle of Plassey, ii: 39; conquered countries outside authority of Parliament, iii: 87; cost of Charles II war with the Dutch, vii: 44; early wars of the colonies, iv: 357; the ending of the, iii: 237; England against Holland, iv: 190; England spared the distress of, iii: 104; estimate of expense of conducting the, iii: 133; expenses of the English wars, v: 259; federalists attempt to involve America in, x: 144; increases paper currency, iv: 361; influence of, on currency, iii: 141; intimations of peace, iv: 199; letter on the causes of the European, v: 63; men not created enemies, iii: 57; might be exterminated by commerce, vii: 6; the power of making, vi: 89; not profitable, iii: 74; profitable to governments, vi: 208; protest against war with Holland, iv: 317; reasons for the war with England, iii: 127; unites American colonies, iii: 29; wars of England, x: 220; wilful and offensive, a sin, iii: 28
War of the Confederates, v: 269
War of the Succession, x: 66
Ward, General Thomas, warning to Paine, i: 310
WASHINGTON, CORRESPONDENCE WITH, iv: 213
WASHINGTON, LETTER TO GEORGE (Paris July 30, 1796), v: 139
Washington Fort, surrenders, iii: 257
WASHINGTON, GEORGE, at Valley Forge, i: 49, iii: 277; at Fort Lee, ii: 267; the bust by Houdon, i: 234; cabal to remove him from command, x: 122; calumniated, viii: 298; campaign of the winter of 1776, iv: 134 et seq.; captures three Hessian regiments, iii: 261; his character, x: 124; conference with Paine and R. Morris (1782), i: 137; his conversation with Boucher, i: 27; connected by "Common Sense," i: 32; his cost to the country, vii: 149; dedication of "Rights of Man" to, vi: 1; elected President (1787), vi: 289; embarrassed by dedication to "Rights of Man," i: 235; his expenses and those of Kings, vi: 278; fifty copies of "Rights of Man," Part 2, sent to, i: 260; fifty copies of "Rights of Man" sent to, i: 236; Gouverneur Morris resemblance to, i: 234; incapable of friendships, v: 152; in the Jerseys, i: 44; key of the Bastille sent to, i: 221; left Paine to die in prison, x: 123; on his letter to the assembly (1780), iv: 250; letter from General Carleton and Admiral Digby, iii: 232; letter to (Paris Sept. 20, 1795), v: 166; letter to Paine (Sept. 18, 1782), iv: 216; letter to Paine (Sept. 10, 1783), vii: 19; letter to the Committee of Safety, v: 185; letter to Paine, quoted, vii: 183; letter to Paine (18 Sept., 1782), i: 139; letter to Paine (10 Sept., 1783), i: 144; letter to Paine (6 May, 1792), i: 239; letter to Joseph Reed (28 May, 1780), quoted, i: 107; Madison's letter to (2 July, 1784), i: 149; military blunders of, x: 123; military character of, v: 192; military rank merely nominal, v: 192; at Morristown (1780), i: 106; he and Paine experiment with marshgas, x: 278; Paine's letter to (June 5, 1778), i: 54; Paine's letter (Nov. 30, 1781), i: 129; Payne's letter to (Sept. 7, 1782), iv: 213; Paine's letter to (10 Sept., 1783), i: 145; Paine's letter to (1 May, 1790),

WASHINGTON, GEORGE, (*continued*)
i: 221; Paine's letter to (31 May, 1790), i: 223; Paine's letter to (21 July, 1791), i: 236; Paine's letter to (13 Feb., 1792), i: 260; Paine's visit to (1783), i: 146; Paine hostile to his administration, x: 115; his salary as President, vi: 291; sends Gouverneur Morris to England (1789), i: 235; sends Gouverneur Morris to London, v: 163; speech to M. Adet, the French Minister, v: 189; his surprise at defeat of Germantown, iii: 270; urges reward for Paine (1784), i: 38
Watson, Dr. Richard, *see* Llandaff, Bishop of
Wealth, of England and France, iv: 346
Wear, the river, Paine's bridge over the, x: 209
Week, the days of the, ix: 64
West Indies, Admiral Rodney's action off the, iv: 208
West Point, Arnold's treachery at, iii: 153
Western territory, the, iv: 55
WHAT IS LOVE? (Poem), addressed to Sir Robert Smyth, x: 323
Wheat-weevil, observations on, i: 207
Whiston, on the Old Testament, ix: 249
Whiteside, Peter, shares expense of Paine's bridge, i: 227
Whitfoord, Goldsmith's epitaph on, x: 347
WILL OF THOMAS PAINE, THE, x: 291
WILLIAM AND MARY, the characters of, vii: 43; establishment of, v: 219; Parliament's declaration to, vi: 18
William the Conqueror, ii: 117; methods of, x: 257
Williams, the Bookseller, the charge against, viii: 333; prosecution of, viii: 311
Williams, Jonathan, Paine's letter to (26 Nov., 1781), i: 125
Wilson, James, opposes Declaration of Rights in American Constitution, i: 175
WOLFE, GENERAL, A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON, ii: 11
WOLFE, THE DEATH OF GENERAL (Poem), x: 301
Woman, Paine publishes plea for the rights of ("An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex"), i: 23
WORD "RELIGION," ETC., OF THE (Prospect Papers), ix: 87
Word of God, is the Creation, viii: 41; ix: 275
WORSHIP AND CHURCH BELLS, ix: 14
WORLDS, ADVANTAGES OF LIFE IN A PLURALITY OF (Age of Reason, I), viii: 83
Worlds, a plurality of, viii: 77
WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE, ON DEISM AND THE (Prospect Papers), ix: 138

X

Xenophon, "Cyropædia," quoted, ix: 72

Y

YELLOW FEVER, THE CAUSE OF THE, x: 273
York and Lancaster, the wars of, ii: 120

Z

Zodiac, the nature of the, ix: 60
Zorcaster, Jewish plagiarism of, ix: 40